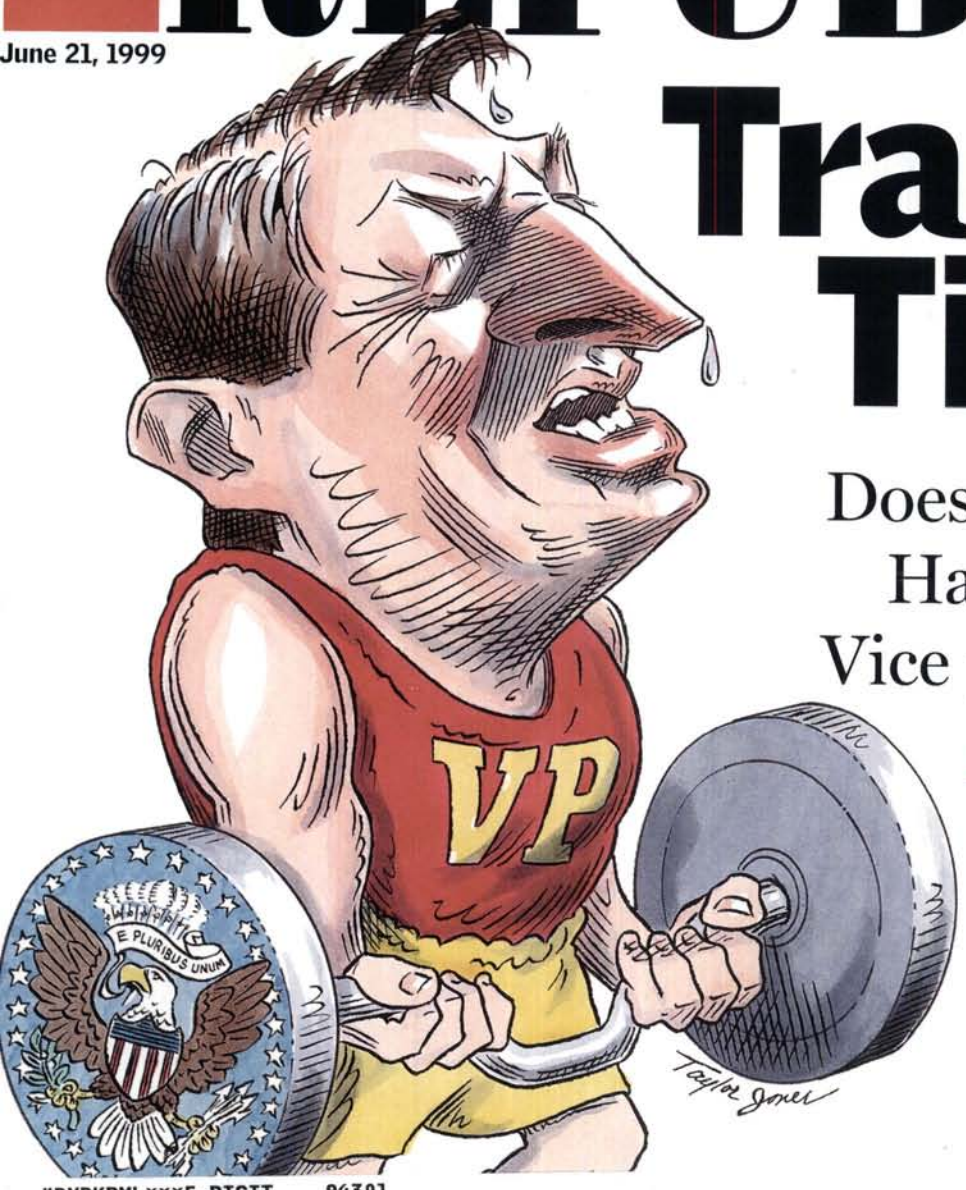
The Republicans' Old World Order JOHN B. JUDIS

Henry Kissinger Reinvents Himself
ROBERT KAGAN

Liddy Does New Hampshire
DANA MILBANK

THE NEW REPUBLIC

June 21, 1999



Training Time

Does it help to Have been Vice president?

By Richard E. Neustadt

PLUS: **HELEN VENDLER**
Rediscovering Matthew Arnold

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4 **CORRESPONDENCE** TV violence, occupying Serbia, &c.

6 **CHARLES LANE** TRB: WARP FACTOR Campaign 2000 gets off to a premature start.

8 **JACOB HEILBRUNN** WASHINGTON SCENE: PATRIOT GAMES Is the capital's most feared defense reporter protecting American national security or puncturing it?

11 **THE EDITORS** THE PEACEFAKER Western leaders are talking about the possibility of a deal with Milosevic. Don't believe the hype.

12 **NOTEBOOK** Jiang Zemin's punditry, "Nightline"'s puffery, &c.

13 **DANA MILBANK** THE *NEW* NEW HAMPSHIRE The press is writing off Liddy Dole as an over-scripted lightweight. But what if she understands the Granite State's changing electorate better than the pundits do?

15 **TIMOTHY NOAH** CARELESS WHISPERS *The Wall Street Journal* wants to assure you that it cannot confirm the rumors that George W. Bush used illegal drugs.

17 **JOSHUA M. SHARFSTEIN** ASLEEP ON THE JOB Everybody wants to ease the workload on young doctors in training. Everybody, that is, except the American medical establishment.

20 **MIRIAM UDEL LAMBERT** CHALLENGING ORTHODOXY A new religious party tries to bridge the divide between synagogue and state in Israel.

22 **JOHN B. JUDIS** BEYOND NATIONAL INTEREST Why looking out for America's self-interest is an un-American way to conduct foreign policy.

26 **RICHARD E. NEUSTADT** TRAINING TIME Al Gore has been among the most involved vice presidents in American history. Will this help or hurt him when it comes to taking the next step?

30 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FIRST KIND Bernardo Bertolucci hits bottom with *Besieged*; *Notting Hill* makes do with star power.

32 **MARTIN FILLER** ON ARCHITECTURE: LIVES OF THE MODERN ARCHITECTS The delicate balance between prurience and understanding is usually upset in biographies of architects.

36 **RON DE MARIS** POEM *El Tigre*

38 **ROBERT KAGAN** THE REVISIONIST According to his new volume of memoirs, it was Henry Kissinger who won the Cold War. But the historical record shows that this is preposterous.

48 **HELEN VENDLER** THE UNBURIED LIFE *A Gift Imprisoned: The Poetic Life of Matthew Arnold* by Ian Hamilton

54 **GREGG EASTERBROOK** WASHINGTON DIARIST: BUYER'S REMORSE

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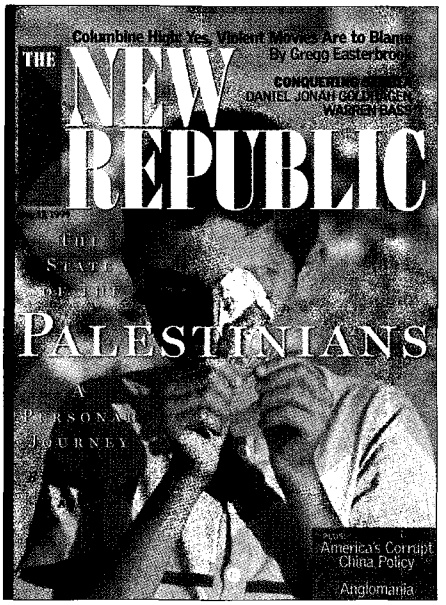
Union dues

TO THE EDITORS:

Ronald Radosh says Christopher Lasch was mistaken in arguing in *The Agony of the American Left* that "those who received funding from the CIA—including intellectuals and labor activists—were serving the aims of the agency and not the causes that they thought they were serving" ("The Unsecret Agent," May 10). But Radosh's own evidence suggests otherwise. In the case of the cold war intellectuals about whom Lasch wrote, the ostensible cause was intellectual independence from the heavy hand of the state, and in the case of Jay Lovestone, the subject of Radosh's review, it was "independent labor unions." In both cases, taking funds from the CIA compromised the ostensible cause, independence, in favor of another cause, combating communism—an aim shared by all concerned. This is not to say that an important disagreement does not separate Radosh and Lasch. Radosh thinks that anti-communism justified the loss of independence, the hypocrisy, and, in the case of Lovestone and others, the lies it entailed. Lasch thought otherwise, holding as he did to the perhaps vain hope



that intellectuals (if not the likes of Jay Lovestone) might place enough trust in the power of their ideas (including those of anti-communism) to forgo a paycheck from spymasters. Not to do so was to fall prey to what he termed the "anti-intellectualism of the intellectuals."

ROBERT WESTBROOK
Brockport, New York

RONALD RADOSH REPLIES:

Robert Westbrook argues in a vacuum unrelated to the historical reality of the time. First, the evidence reveals that the AFL-CIO funds obtained from the CIA were in fact used to support truly independent trade unionism in Western Europe, unionism that would have faltered if the funds were not made available to counter those supporting the Communists coming from the KGB. Good Social Democrats did in fact have the necessary ideas to counter Marxism-Leninism—but these ideas were not sufficient to interfere with the actual plans of Communist-led unions to wage political strikes against the Marshall Plan.

More on McCain

TO THE EDITORS:

David Grann's reporting that "[John] McCain's old friend Attorney General Grant Woods eventually convicted [former Arizona Governor Fife] Symington on seven counts of bank and wire fraud" is quite wrong ("The Hero Myth," May 24). Neither Woods nor anyone from his state office ever prosecuted Symington. The U.S. attorney's office did convict Symington, whose convictions and prison sentences are on appeal to the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. What disturbs me more than that simple, understandable mistake is the quote from Grant Woods that follows this misstatement. Did Woods really take credit for something he clearly did not do?

CRAIG MEHRENS
Phoenix, Arizona

TO THE EDITORS:

Please allow me to set the record straight with regard to David Grann's article on John McCain. Grann writes that I met with "60 Minutes" producer Tom Anderson in 1997 to discuss the show's upcoming profile of McCain. That is true. But Grann gets it wrong when he states that I "had probed McCain's poor environmental record and fund-raising practices so doggedly that the senator had refused to speak to her [me] for five years."

Here's what really happened: I interviewed McCain for a profile in March 1994. The next time I tried to reach him was in the fall of that year, when my editor Jeremy Voas and I were preparing a story about McCain's wife Cindy's addiction to prescription painkillers. McCain did not respond to numerous requests for an interview and did not respond to requests on subsequent stories after the painkiller piece appeared. In fact, McCain and his staff "boycotted" a number of Arizona journalists after the painkiller story

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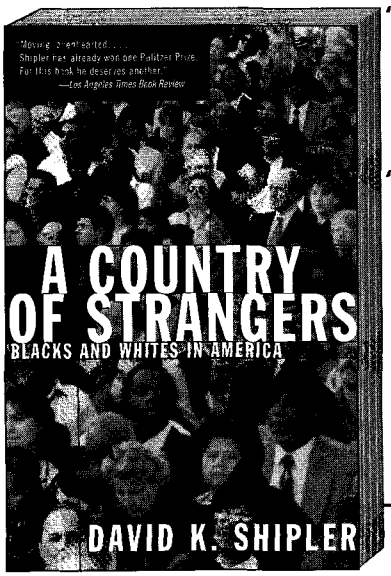

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broke. The stories on the environment and fund-raising Grann refers to were not published until the summer of 1998.

McCain and his staff continued to ignore my repeated written requests for interviews on myriad topics until March of this year, when both the senator and his chief of staff, Mark Salter, granted me phone interviews on a story about McCain's relationship with the POW-MIA community.

As far as I can surmise, as of my meeting with Anderson, McCain had refused to speak to me for a little more than three years because of the painkiller piece. The senator and I have not spoken about the reason for his boycott of me; you'd have to ask him about it to be certain. Frankly, I expected more from THE NEW REPUBLIC.

AMY SILVERMAN
Staff Writer
Phoenix New Times
Phoenix, Arizona

DAVID GRANN REPLIES:
Amy Silverman is right: at the time of the "60 Minutes" story, McCain had not spoken to her for three years, and the rift was caused by her article on his wife. As for Woods, he investigated Symington, but it was the feds who actually prosecuted him, which explains his quotation. One final clarification: My story noted that McCain had voted in the House against making Martin Luther King Jr. Day a federal holiday, which he did. But years later he wrote a letter supporting the holiday when it came up as a state initiative. I regret the errors.

Goldhagen's willing critics

TO THE EDITORS:
Daniel Jonah Goldhagen asks whether Serbia and its current opponents would "be better off if Serbia were governed by a Saddam Hussein or a Konrad Adenauer" ("A New Serbia," May 17).

Although Goldhagen refers to the postwar experiences of both Germany and Japan, his model for the fate of Serbia is clearly the Federal Republic of Germany. "Germany, in particular," he writes, "has become a force for democracy, cooperation, and prosperity beyond its borders."

While there's no question that Allied occupation policy in western Germany contributed greatly to the postwar democratic developments there, Goldhagen's almost idealized version of that experience could lead Western policymakers to overlook some key differences in Serbia's

continued on page 52

THE DIRTY BUSINESS OF KEEPING AMERICA
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THE CULTURE OF FEAR

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Warp Factor

WELL, IT'S JUNE 1999, which must mean it's time for—Campaign 2000! Now that the Texas legislature has at last finished its momentous work, George W. Bush is poised to embark on his first visits to Iowa and New Hampshire. In an effort to steal some of Bush's thunder, Al Gore is going to officially announce his candidacy on June 16, months earlier than he had planned. And, from out there in supply-side land, zillionaire publisher Steve Forbes has just launched his first $10 million worth of self-financed campaign ads. Exactly 600 days before the next president will be sworn in (as pointed out by the political news service Hotline), viewers in Iowa, New Hampshire, Arizona, and California were already being treated to their first dose of Mr. Hope, Growth, and Opportunity and his proposals to privatize Social Security and "throw out the whole current [tax] code." Is it just me, or does the Forbes campaign lack a basic sense of irony? After all, one reason Forbes can afford to indulge his presidential fantasies must be that the Clinton boom and accompanying bull market have swollen the value of his already immense personal portfolio. How much richer is America supposed to get under the Forbes administration, for crying out loud?

Presidential politics is trapped in a time warp. As has already been commented upon in these pages (see "Primary Problem," May 17), both parties have front-loaded their primary schedules. The idea was to choose nominees with a minimum of intraparty strife by no later than the middle of March 2000; the result has been to shove the scramble back to well before the All-Star break in the 1999 baseball season. Everyone in politics knows that voters aren't paying much attention to this frenzied early activity. Still, all the candidates feel obliged to take part in the pageant; none dares risk disappointing the media, the financiers, or the party activists.

The time warp exacerbates the already existing issues warp. Yes, Forbes is out there banging his supply-side drum, and Buchanan is going on about the destiny of America and the ancestral rights of the Serbs in Kosovo. (If only Belgrade had a primary!) But, at the presumptive top tier, among Bush and Gore and Bradley and Dole, mostly what you hear are vague generalities. There's a reason for this—and it's not just that all four are, by nature, cautious centrists. For now, at least, there *are* no issues.

Of course America has problems: the long-term financing of entitlements, the lingering shame of inner-city poverty, dealing with China. But none of these are critical issues in the sense of something that both poses a clear and present danger to the well-being of the average middle-class voter and can only be handled at the top, in Washington. The 1968 election was about race relations and Vietnam; 1980 was a referendum on Iran, interest rates, and inflation. But, other than the chronological artifact of the new millennium, it's hard to identify any critical issue that the 2000 presidential election will hinge on. Global warming? Sorry, the volume on my CD player in the sport utility vehicle is stuck on "max." I can't hear you.

Yes, the polls show that the public is deeply concerned about the education of America's children, but this hardly promises to energize, much less polarize, the election. All the top candidates have similar-sounding positions (the fundamental Democrat-Republican divide on tuition tax credits and vouchers being a notable exception), and there's little the federal government can do about the day-to-day workings of America's hyperlocal school system, anyway. Voters know this; indeed, by identifying education as their chief concern, they are actually sending a kind of signal that there's not much they really need from Washington right now.

As long as the economy remains strong and huge numbers of body bags don't start coming home from Kosovo, the rest of this year should pretty much be an extended beauty contest among the top contenders—lots of photo-ops with school kids and not many bold policy departures. It will be a waiting game, the object of which is not to be the first one to screw up.

This is no fun for pundits and is probably not much fun for the candidates, either. Certainly there's going to be a lot of pressure on George W. to flesh out his "compassionate conservatism" mantra. Then again, as long as no major embarrassments blow up on him, the GOP elders will probably succeed in getting their primary voters to anoint him. Paradoxically, the one candidate who has the most to lose in this situation is the vice president.

To some extent, Gore has himself to blame for his campaign's lack of a clear message thus far. He has spent so much time and political capital rounding up the support of public employees, teachers, blacks, and party officials (à la Mondale '84) that it's hard to see how he could ever score points by even pretending to take on his own party's traditional special interest groups, as Clinton did in '92.

But, even if that weren't the case, the veep simply doesn't have the freedom to differentiate himself very much from the president he has so loyally served. Nor is it in his interest to do so—especially given the fact that he'll probably never have the kind of emotional purchase on the electorate that Clinton has (or Reagan had). As long as the economy remains strong and foreign affairs don't go radically sour, Gore's strongest possible message is a promise to perpetuate the Clinton boom, coupled with some hinting around the edges that he would restore adult supervision to the White House.

The problem, of course, is that the minute it becomes necessary for Gore to change this message, it will already be too late to do so. As the quasi-incumbent, Gore will be held accountable—either by Bradley from within his own party or by the Republican nominee—for even the slightest sign of economic imperfection or foreign policy trouble between now and the New Hampshire primary. Not necessarily fair, but, hey, you live by the boom, you die by the bust.

Gore's recent efforts to find some wiggle room in this situation have so far managed mainly to compound the basic dilemma. Pushing up the official announcement of his candidacy is intended to stop George W. from hogging the limelight. But this abrupt change of plan inevitably looks reactive—it's the sort of brainstorm that serves mainly to suggest how rattled the Gore camp must be by the polls showing him still trailing Bush by a double-digit margin. The recent Mayflower Hotel rally to shore up Gore's support among women, complete with an ostentatious Gore-Hillary bear hug, also seemed less an expression of campaign confidence than the opposite. It simply reinforced the news about a supposed Gore-Hillary rift and gave the papers another chance to note that Gore is the first Democratic front-runner in a long time to be trailing a top Republican among female voters.

It's not exactly what guys like Tony Coelho get paid to tell their clients, but, in the weird world of issue-warp politics, the best advice might be, "Don't just do something, stand there." Of course, such a strategy would also require Gore himself to do what comes least naturally to him in politics: relax.

CHARLES LANE

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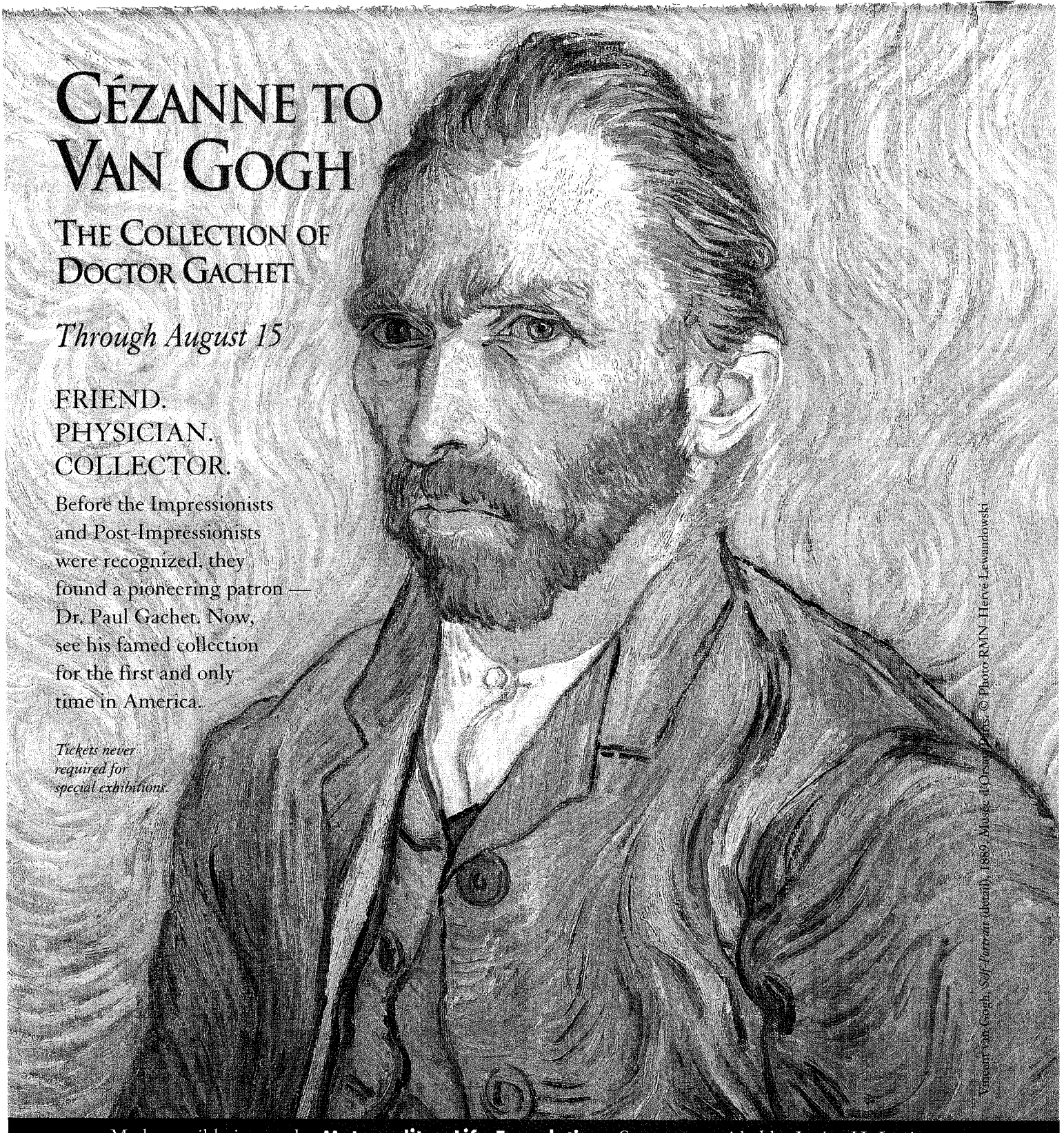

Vincent van Gogh, *Self-Portrait* (detail), 1889. Musée d'Orsay, Paris. © Photo RMN-Hervé Lewandowski

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WASHINGTON SCENE

Patriot Games

A DAY AFTER THE release of the Cox report on Chinese espionage, an all-star roster of conservative writers gathered at the Heritage Foundation to feast on its findings. The feasters included William C. Triplett, coauthor of a book about China and the Clinton administration called *Year of the Rat*, and Kenneth Timmerman, a writer for *The American Spectator*, who has claimed that as many as 10,000 Chinese nationals in the United States are spying for their homeland. But the star of the show—or, as Triplett simply called him, "the man"—was *Washington Times* defense reporter Bill Gertz, author of the breathless new book *Betrayal: How the Clinton Administration Undermined American Security*. Filled with embarrassing tidbits and sweeping allegations about the Clinton administration's conduct of foreign policy, it has just debuted on *The New York Times* best-seller list.

In Washington, Gertz is a familiar figure, one whose foreign policy scoops in the right-wing *Times* have confounded the Clinton administration and delighted its conservative critics. "He is a burr under the saddle of the Clinton administration," confirms James Woolsey, Clinton's first and most disenchanted CIA director. "Bill is a voice that has to be listened to in this town."

Indeed, Gertz's reporting has been a source of consternation not only for the administration but also for *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, both of which he regularly scoops. It was Gertz who revealed in a March 1998 story that, in preparation for Clinton's June summit meeting in China, National Security Council aide Gary Samore had drawn up a plan offering China expanded commercial and scientific cooperation in exchange for China's agreement to join the Missile Technology Control Regime. Under Samore's plan, the United States would have issued a "blanket presidential waiver of Tiananmen Square sanctions to cover all future commercial satellite launches."

Gertz, who is 47, says that, for him, "Woodward and Bernstein were models." As Gertz tells it, he wants to use investigative reporting to expose evil and wrongdoing in high places; those high places just happen to be occupied by Democrats these days. A college dropout, he landed an interview in 1985 with *The Washington Times*' swashbuckling editor, Arnaud de Borchgrave. "We talked about Woodward," de Borchgrave recalls. "The more Gertz talked, the more I was convinced he had the right stuff." De Borchgrave put Gertz on the defense beat and introduced him to his first intelligence sources.

From the outset, Gertz explored nuclear nonproliferation and Third World arms transfers, which would become key post-cold-war issues. His first big break came in the late '80s, when he revealed that China was going to sell intermediate-range ballistic missiles to Saudi Arabia. But it's during the Clinton era that Gertz has started scoring his biggest stories. In 1994, he filed a series of articles—based on documents leaked to him from inside the Pentagon—about how the Clinton administration was supposedly giving away the store to the Russians during negotiations over ballistic missile defense. Subsequent articles on the administration's bungling of policy toward China and North Korea followed suit. Before long, it seemed, Gertz was breaking a story a day. As for his sources, Gertz obviously won't reveal them. "There is a big witch-hunt under way to find sources," he told me.

Yet it is an open secret that Gertz gets his stories—usually buttressed by classified documents—from disgruntled conservative military and intelligence officers within the bowels of the Pentagon and the CIA. As Gertz puts it in his book, the Clinton "betrayal of American national security so angered some intelligence, defense, and foreign policy officials that they responded in the only way they knew how: by disclosing some of the nation's most secret intelligence"—to Bill Gertz.

Woolsey, who provided a blurb for Gertz's book, is quick to note that he wasn't aware that the book would have a 60-page appendix reprinting classified documents. Actually, the appendix—"The Paper Trail"—is 66 pages, if you include the six pages Gertz's publisher, Regnery, left conspicuously blank "at the request of the National Security Agency." Woolsey doesn't approve of these leaks.

Which raises the basic dilemma of Gertz's unbridled approach. He calls his moles in the national security bureaucracy "dissidents and patriots." But what kind of patriot gives away state secrets to the press—and, furthermore, what kind of patriot prints them? If Gertz really was a Bob Woodward—digging for damaging secrets and wrongdoings about a Republican president—you can bet he wouldn't be the toast of the Heritage Foundation.

And, though Gertz's sleuthing skills are not in question, the judiciousness with which he weighs and assesses the pertinence of the classified documents handed over to him is another issue entirely. In 1997, for instance, Gertz disclosed that North Korea already possessed nuclear weapons and was planning to conduct nuclear tests. He repeats this claim in his book. But Gertz's basis for this accusation is the leaked transcripts of debriefings of North Korean defectors. The CIA has let it be known that the North has enough fissile material to build at least one nuclear bomb. And clearly the North wants to build one. But does it actually have the weapons? Other reporters might have been more cautious about treating assertion as fact, given the possibility that the defectors could be exaggerating to enhance their importance or are really double agents.

More recently, in *The Washington Times*, Gertz revealed, once again on the basis of classified information, that national security intercepts indicated that Chinese secret agents were notifying Beijing that the American missile attack on the Belgrade embassy had, in fact, been deliberate. But exactly how was Gertz—or his source—aiding American national security by revealing such information? The story simply alerted the Chinese to the fact that the United States can read their codes, which the Chinese, in turn, will surely alter.

No doubt, the bureaucracy tends to make a fetish of secrecy—the CIA, which still refuses to declassify important cold war documents, above all. All too often, classification serves as a way of endowing readers with an illusory sense of importance. As George F. Kennan has observed, for all the posturing by foreign policy experts, most of what one needs to know can be obtained by toddling off to the local library.

Most, not all. By handing over reams of classified documents to a reporter just because they oppose the particular incumbent president and his policies, Gertz's "unsung heroes" run the risk of jeopardizing U.S. intelligence-gathering in ways that, by definition, we can't know about. This may be personally risky and even politically shrewd. But is it "patriotism" and "dissent"? When challenged, Gertz bristles: "There seems to be the notion that unless you leak to *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* you have an ulterior motive. I really don't care what the motive is." Maybe he should.

JACOB HEILBRUNN

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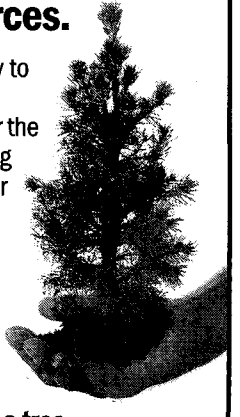

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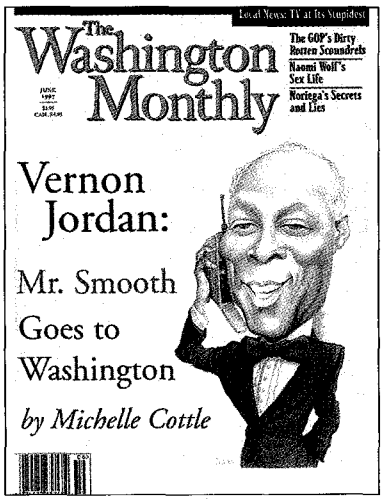
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The Peacefaker

MORE THAN TWO months into Operation Allied Force, Slobodan Milosevic's resolve is beginning to crumble, and Russian intransigence is faltering along with it. That, at least, is the new line from Western governments. A White House official describes President Clinton as being "cautiously optimistic" that a diplomatic settlement—agreed to first by Russia, then by Milosevic—can be achieved. German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder pronounces that "progress has been made." Western governments are so tantalized by Milosevic's hinted willingness to strike a deal that they have pressed Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, the European Union's envoy to Kosovo, to travel to Belgrade with Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin. This will be the first time Milosevic will have greeted an official Western visitor—Jesse Jackson and meddling U.S. congressmen don't count—since the bombs began to fall in March. At long last, it seems, negotiated victory is at hand!

Well, maybe not. Despite the heady talk of the past few days, a number of deal-breaking differences remain among NATO, the Russians, and, most importantly, Milosevic. Chernomyrdin has signaled that Russia would now accept NATO troops in any peacekeeping force—something it was adamantly unwilling to do only a few weeks ago. But he's also made the untenable stipulation that Russian and NATO peacekeepers would have to be under separate commands, presumably with the Russian soldiers stationed in northern Kosovo, which borders on Serbia, and the NATO troops in the south, next to Albania.

As for Milosevic, yes, he did formally accept the principles for a peace accord set out in early May by the Group of Seven industrialized nations and Russia. But, even if you trust that Milosevic is being sincere in his acceptance, those principles—particularly when they refer to such critical issues as the withdrawal of all Serbian forces from Kosovo and the makeup of the peacekeeping force—are vague to the point of meaninglessness. And Milosevic continues to demand a halt to the air strikes as a precondition for any deal.

But, even assuming that all of this diplomatic to-ing and fro-ing connotes some sort of underlying change in the Serbian position, does it follow that NATO's air-only strategy has been vindicated as Western officials now maintain? Some Western officials also note that Milosevic may be feeling pressure from his recent indictment by the war crimes tribunal. But what seems far more likely is that Milosevic only began to see the need for at least a cosmetic shift after NATO actually began to make a show of actively considering using ground troops.

Indeed, in recent weeks, the possibility of actually introducing NATO ground troops into the Balkans—and, by extension, forcibly taking Kosovo—has, for the first time, seemed at least imaginable. First, on May 18, President Clinton made the ambiguous but suggestive statement that he "will not take any option off the table" when it came to Operation Allied Force—a departure from his previous insistence that the option of ground troops was, in fact, off the table. Then, two days later, word leaked that the NATO commander, General Wesley Clark, on a visit to the Pentagon, had advocated the massing of 45,000 to 50,000 troops on Kosovo's borders, ostensibly to constitute a peacekeeping force, but also as a show of potential force. Not long after that, NATO went along with Clark's suggestion, agreeing to nearly double the size of the potential peacekeeping force from 28,000 to 50,000. Moreover, Clark has briefed the defense ministers of Britain, France, Germany, and Italy on the logistics of a ground invasion, and Secretary of Defense William Cohen has asked the Germans—whose chancellor had been going around calling a NATO ground invasion "unthinkable"—to pipe down. This week, when President Clinton meets with his Joint Chiefs of Staff for the first time since Operation Allied Force was launched, issue number one will be ground troops (though Clark, for reasons we don't comprehend but instinctively distrust, will be excluded from the meeting).

Of course, just because ground troops are now under more active consideration doesn't mean that NATO has the resolve to use them. Nor does it mean that, in the event they are used, they'll be used wisely. Right now, NATO, wary of offending Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, appears eager to avoid beginning the liberation of Kosovo with an invasion of Serbia from one or more of those countries and is instead wedded to the strategy of launching an invasion of Kosovo from the difficult terrain in the south, starting in Albania. Under this scenario, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which, in the past few weeks, has mounted new offensives on the Kosovo-Albania border, would essentially serve as the opening wedge for NATO's expeditionary force, securing the border area and a major highway that runs into central Kosovo.

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Indeed, as *The Washington Post* reported on June 2, NATO is now supplying the KLA with air support as it attempts to do just that.

But the KLA is not exactly an ideal ally in this endeavor: its nationalism is plenty virulent, too, and it's not a particularly effective fighting force. Even with NATO air support, the KLA was routed by the Yugoslav army in its recent engagements, making it doubtful that the guerrilla army will be of much help in paving the way for a NATO ground invasion. And so, for all of the purported movement, military and diplomatic, of recent weeks, the basic facts about this war remain what they were at the outset: victory is vital; it will take ground forces, including a large component of American ground forces, to win; and it is still not clear whether either the Clinton administration or NATO is ready to accept these inescapable realities. ■

NOTEBOOK

NAME THAT AUTHOR: Here's an unexpected benefit of the virtual exclusion of the United Nations from the military and diplomatic goings-on in Kosovo: it's freed Secretary-General Kofi Annan to pursue a second career in magazine journalism. Annan is the "guest editor" of the latest bimonthly issue of *Civilization*. And, although it's hard to spot Annan's personal influence at the level of, say, photo captions and pull quotes, the issue does reflect the unique moral influence of a lifelong U.N. employee. Consider the clarion call for nuclear disarmament on page 85: "For 50 years and more, hanging over our heads like a Sword of Damocles, nuclear weapons have never ceased threatening humanity's survival," writes Jiang Zemin, the president of China. That's right. In Kofi Annan's *Civilization*, the boss of the state that supplied Pakistan with the building blocks for nuclear weapons and mounted an elaborate campaign to steal American nuclear secrets is qualified to chide the United States for failing to cut down its own nuclear arsenal—and to tell the world that there is "no reason why nuclear weapons ... should not be comprehensively banned and thoroughly destroyed." A note on the table of contents page reminds readers that "the views expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Secretary-General of the United Nations." Always careful, Annan seems to have gone to the trouble of recruiting this absurd article and putting it before the public, but in such a way as to ensure that he could not be held responsible for it.

WINNIED OVER: Ted Koppel and "Nightline" are about as good as it gets in network TV news. But what happened to the usually tough-minded show on June 1? The occasion was the eve of a South African election, one that would conclude President Nelson Mandela's remarkable political career and pave the way for the nation's first peaceful transition from one elected black leader to another. "Nightline" producers chose this historic moment to shine the spotlight on one of the more pernicious figures in contemporary South Africa, Mandela's ex-wife, Winnie. Winnie Mandela is known as much for her alleged corruption and involvement in the kidnapping and murder of a 14-year-old boy as for the hardships she endured during the anti-apartheid struggle. Currently, she is playing the role of ultranationalist spoiler in the still-fragile transition to multiracial democracy. But little of this made it into the interview with Winnie Mandela that was supplied to "Nightline" by photojournalist David Turnley. "How do you explain the way that so many people in your country identify with you and support you?" Turnley asks Mandela in one typical exchange. Asked by Koppel what the future might hold for Winnie, Turnley gushed, "As heroic as her husband's spirit of reconciliation has been, Winnie will continue to fight for the *real* transformation of the lives of her people." Translation: As soon as Nelson Mandela is out of the picture, she is going to start attacking his successor, Thabo Mbeki, from the left, pushing a program of unsustainable economic populism and racial polarization. It was Nelson Mandela's commitment to resist that course, and to convince the majority of his countrymen to follow his example, that has gotten South Africa this far. That would seem to have been the real story from South Africa that night; too bad "Nightline" chose to give Winnie Mandela a forum to tell a different one.

HAIL...: We are utterly delighted to announce the publication by Random House of *The Broken Estate: Essays on Literature and Belief* by our senior editor James Wood. Most of these forceful, erudite, and lively essays, which treat writers from Jane Austen and Herman Melville to Don DeLillo and Toni Morrison, appeared in these pages during the last three years. When the book appeared in England a few months ago, the seriousness of its tone and the grandeur of its approach to "literature and belief," to the traditions of fiction and the traditions of faith, were recognized. " 'Serious' books on literature and belief abound," wrote one British reviewer, "but we have very few critics who can vie with Jarrell and Toynbee, who can remind us that talking about literature is a part of what literature is about, and talking about it with passion, precision, and out of a rich store of reading is a rare and precious gift: it is good for all of us that James Wood has it and we have James Wood." The book also provoked controversy, which suited the writings of such a determined controversialist: for some, Wood's classical strictness about the labors of the imagination, and his reluctance to abide only with irony in literature and in life, was too inconvenient. As our readers know, Wood is a witty man who refuses to lighten up; and, for reason of this paradox, too, our association with this writer and this book makes us proud.

AND FAREWELL: We're considerably less delighted to have to announce that, with this issue, Roger Rosenblatt leaves the ranks of our contributing editors, a change necessitated by his accepting a new position as editor-at-large at Time Inc. We wish Roger well. ■

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Liddy Dole's savvy script.

The *New* New Hampshire

By DANA MILBANK

LONDONDERRY, New Hampshire

ELIZABETH DOLE IS only a few minutes into her act at Londonderry High School, and already one wishes that one of those vaudevillian hooks would magically appear and put her out of her misery.

Dole searches pitiably for a way to connect with a group of 100 students, whom she is addressing in front of the cameras. "Maybe some of you have read Tom Brokaw's book *The Greatest Generation*?" she ventures. (Blank looks.) She tries another one: "Dr. Jeane Kirkpatrick signed on to be my foreign policy advisory chairman." (Baffled silence.) She then launches a discussion about America's failing schools, but she assures the topic's irrelevance when she tells the kids "this doesn't apply" to them and their school. As the youngsters fidget, some with chins in hands, others giggling, she points out, helpfully, that the Red Cross, under her leadership, spent 92 cents of every dollar on its programs. The school principal finally decides to end the agony and walks up to the podium.

NAJLAH FEANNY / SABA

Weaving her web.

"Is my time over?" Dole asks.

"We're about to have a bell ring," the principal says, even though the bell doesn't ring for another ten minutes.

Dole's performance was particularly dismal compared with John McCain's sweep through New Hampshire three days later. When McCain takes the podium at a Rotary breakfast outside Concord, he connects immediately. Introduced as a former POW and a father of seven, he speaks like an ordinary guy in a gravelly, no-nonsense voice. He charmingly mocks Clinton's China policy ("Los Alamos is like the visitors center at the Grand Canyon") and speaks about how campaign finance abuses are alienating young voters ("They think we're corrupt. You know what? They're right"). Then he shifts to a Memorial Day message about a fellow POW named Mike Christian, who sewed an American flag inside his shirt so that the prisoners could say the Pledge of Allegiance. His captors discovered the flag and beat Christian for two hours, but he returned to the cell and began to sew another flag. McCain's listeners sit in rapt attention. One man actually begins to cry.

The contrast is an important one, because Dole and McCain are the two presidential candidates fighting to be the mainstream choice of Republicans should George W. Bush falter. If the matter were up to the press and the political elite, the contest would already be over: McCain by a mile. Opinion-makers just won't give the robotic Dole any respect, even though she's second only to Bush in the polls, which also show her trouncing Al Gore. She doesn't have the money to go the distance, handicappers say, and she's too canned to survive on the campaign trail. Her scripting has become such a cliché that it's now a "Doonesbury" gag.

Journalists and the elite, on the other hand, adore McCain. They admire him as a habitual straight-shooter who speaks hard truths. McCain tells Iowans he opposes their ethanol subsidies. He stands boldly (and lonely) in favor of ground troops in Kosovo. Asked during a television interview in New Hampshire whether he would defend the local military base in Portsmouth from base closings, McCain refuses to pander. Later, in his van, he mocks the base-closing question. "Sure, I'm going to protect Portsmouth," he says. "Why don't we turn it into an ethanol plant and ship the corn out from Iowa?" An aide in the front seat shakes his head. "Don't do that to me," he says. McCain, in Ray-Ban sunglasses, ignores his aide and treats his listeners to indiscreet (but, alas, off-the-record) comments about Trent Lott and Barbara Boxer.

The comparison, clearly, is not a kind one to Dole. But, luckily for her, journalists do not constitute the majority of the electorate in New Hampshire. The admiration of the press and policy wonks will only get a candidate so far, as President Bruce Babbitt will attest. Bob Dole himself was more like McCain than Elizabeth on the campaign trail (perhaps that's why he talks of contributing to McCain now) and was also admired by opinion-makers for his sharp wit. Today, Bob Dole works for Pfizer.

That leads to the main reason not to write off Liddy Dole—at least not in New Hampshire. Dole, despite her inability to charm the opinion-makers, understands something that some rivals seem to have missed here: the deeply changed Republican electorate. The old stereotype of a blue-collar, conservative state, enamored of hunting rifles and hostile to anything resembling a tax, no longer applies. New Hampshire is far more prosperous than it was even four years ago, with an exploding technology industry. It has the highest concentration of software workers in the United States, at

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8.4 percent of the workforce, according to the American Electronics Association. Many commute (or telecommute) to Boston's Route 128 technology corridor. In New Hampshire itself, there are 1,000 software companies, quadruple the number from four years ago, and Portsmouth's Seacoast area has taken to calling itself the "e-coast."

All of which helps explain why New Hampshire residents, most of them transplants (only 33 percent of household heads are New Hampshire natives, according to University of New Hampshire Professor Ross Gittell), are far less conservative than they used to be. They've elected a Democratic governor and state Senate. Dole's polls show that GOP primary voters are pro-choice by two to one. The legislature just approved the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. The *Concord Monitor* reported a poll showing that education was the state's overwhelming concern, while gun rights were mentioned by only three percent of those surveyed. "New Hampshire is not the same New Hampshire it was four years ago," says a Dole aide. "People have misread the electorate of this state.... We've cracked the code."

THUS, MANY OF Dole's supposedly suicidal stands—tough on guns, neutralish on abortion—will likely play well in the new New Hampshire. During her speech to workers at the Lockheed-Martin plant in Nashua, her remark on gun control ("I don't see why we need an Uzi or an AK-47 to go hunting") drew the loudest applause by far. She's defied GOP isolationists by calling for victory in Kosovo, whatever it takes. In Londonderry, she even praised Clinton's Americorps program, which Republicans have labored to kill.

Naturally Dole's staff does not boast of this strategy, for fear of alienating the GOP's conservative base. But, with so many conservative candidates splitting the right-wing vote, it makes sense to play for the middle. This strategy has the added benefit of allowing Dole to cultivate the image of a McCain-style maverick—even as she tailors her stances to fit the increasingly moderate New Hampshire electorate. On the air at Nashua's WSMN radio during her visit, Dole made another strong push for gun control and safety locks: voters, she declared, "respect a person who doesn't look to the polls to see what your position's going to be."

Similarly, at the high school, Dole promised the kids, "I don't get my passions from polling." Yet this came moments after she declared that education was Americans' number-one concern—a fact that could have been established only by polling. Later, she boasted to the Lockheed workers that her fund-raising deficiencies would be overcome by—you guessed it—polls. She leads Gore by twelve percent, she said, has 92 percent name recognition, and has 72 to 80 percent favorable ratings. "That's worth fifteen million dollars right there," she said. Yes, Dole gets passion from polls, but so what? Here, in increasingly liberal New Hampshire, she's reading them right.

Behind the scenes, Dole is aggressively courting New Hampshire's new technology community. Her New Hampshire chairman is Jesse Devitte, a software entrepreneur and chairman of the Software Association of New Hampshire. Devitte, who worked for Bob Dole in '88 and '96, turned down an offer from George W. Bush. Four of the 14 people on Liddy Dole's New Hampshire committee are high-tech executives; they are helping her infiltrate technology corridors, such as the abandoned textile mills along the Merrimack River in Manchester. One of these old redbrick buildings is now home to Granite Systems, which employs 55 people—52 more than it employed just three years ago. The chief is a Dole man. A couple of doors down is RealWorld Corporation, where the boss is another Dole backer. Dole's picture is on the company bulletin board.

Devitte says Dole will spend less time campaigning in the conservative north and more time among the white-collar technology workers down south. Many of these people are independents, who are allowed to vote in the Republican primary in New Hampshire. Dole herself, when I asked her about the strategy of appealing to the tech community, said: "It's not a strategy; it's the reality. This is the future. Just as oil and steel were at the turn of the century, it's the Internet in 2000."

DOLE'S MESSAGE WILL play well here, it seems to me. She may be scripted, but she's got a decent script. In a typical speech, there's the 30-years-in-public-service bit ("It was a noble thing to do"); the I'm-a-businesswoman bit (her reform of the Red Cross's blood-supply system "was the most wrenching cultural change I've ever been through"); the humanitarian-voyager-to-Africa bit ("If you can imagine, I had to step over dead bodies"); the tough-on-Serbia bit ("If we can't defeat a third-rate despot like Milosevic, we're in trouble"); and bits about tax relief, missile defense, education, and "a *crew*sade" against youth smoking.

The question isn't the message but the messenger: Can she surrender enough of the staging to make herself seem human to the opinion-makers? The signs are not encouraging. At each stop, she climbs from her van with a fixed smile, as if masking some unseen source of pain. "How are ewe?" she asks. "Good to see ewe today. So wonderful to be with ewe. Thank ewe." Over and over, like a Tickle Me Elmo. As I waited for her to arrive in Londonderry that morning, the school principal remarked to me that Dole was due at 9:55 but added, "I'll believe it when I see it." Believe it, I told her. She's very precise. Sure enough, the van pulled up at 9:55. The candidate was so well prepped that she already seemed to know everybody there. "Thank ewe for the introduction," she said to one boy, who hadn't yet introduced her.

Even the celebrated Dole stroll, her attempt to show a casual side, seems mechanical. Following her footwork in front of the high school students, as I did, was like watching some kind of foxtrot. *Left forward, right forward, right back, left back, cross, cross, cross, cross, cross, cross, cross, cross, left forward, right forward, right back, left back. Rest right hand on lectern, and repeat. Ready? Left forward, right forward....*

That afternoon, at the Lockheed facility, Dole had the microphone clipped to her jacket for another free-range appearance. "I'm talking from behind the podium today because I'd like to deliver a statement I just put together in the last couple of minutes," she began. "I'd like you all to listen while I deliver this statement. Then I can be more infor-

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mal and get out in the middle." After reading her statement, on Clinton and China, she continued. "Now, let me be a bit more informal here," she said, brushing her hair back with her left hand, as if she had said, "Let me slip into something more comfortable." Then she assumed a broad smile and plunged forth toward the crowd. Oddly, announcing her stage instructions seemed to undercut the whole point of the Dole stroll. She had announced that she was about to make a gesture that connotes informality, thereby making the gesture, by definition, a formal one. Left forward, right forward, right back....

Traveling with Dole in New Hampshire last week was Monica Crowley, the conservative hagiographer who made Richard Nixon seem soft and fuzzy. Now Crowley is on a new assignment: trying, as she puts it, "to humanize another Republican," namely, Elizabeth Dole. Crowley has her work cut out for her. ■

Beating around the Bush.

Careless Whispers

By TIMOTHY NOAH

Aware that the womanizing rumors were the most worrisome cloud over his potential campaign, Clinton tried to inoculate himself against future questions by bringing Hillary to the [reporters'] breakfast. Toward the end of the hour, he acknowledged that his marriage had "not been perfect or free of difficulties," but he assured the room that he and Hillary had worked it out and expected to be together forever. The message was clear: His past wasn't prologue.

—George Stephanopoulos, *All Too Human*

When I was young and irresponsible, I was young and irresponsible.

—George W. Bush

IT WOULD BE reasonable for George W. Bush to hope that the national press's frustrating experience covering Bill Clinton's personal life bodes well for Bush's presidential candidacy. The muddled conclusion to Bimbroglio—confirmation that the president had sex with a White House intern and lied about it under oath, news of which was greeted by a national consensus that the Senate shouldn't remove Clinton from office—does raise the question of whether character-cop journalism is worth all the aggravation. It also raises to preposterously high levels the bar on bad behavior: it won't be easy for Bush's youthful indiscretions, whatever they were, to match Clinton's middle-aged ones. This logic suggests that the press won't pursue stories involving Bush's personal life.

Balanced against this hope are a few other realities. Cable news programs, to a much greater extent than their network forebears, depend on scandal for ratings. Unlike the mass network audience, the relatively small cable audience can be pumped up substantially when there's a hot story. With 24-hour news outlets like Fox and MSNBC, there's also a greater hunger for more stories in general. There's the explosion of information, both good and bad, on the Internet. And, more loftily, there's what might be called the "too late" factor—the argument that the press, by failing to expose Clinton's past moral offenses more thoroughly in 1992, gave him the opportunity to commit further moral offenses as president. According to this logic, the media will have no choice but to dig relentlessly for dirt on Bush.

Which will it be—more coverage of candidates' private lives in the 2000 campaign or less? A May 14 page-one story in *The Wall Street Journal* can be construed as fulfilling either prediction. The article investigated various nasty rumors that had been circulating about Bush and concluded that, while no evidence could be found to back them up, much evidence *could* be found to contradict them. Because the story was quite specific about what those rumors were, it served to give them wider currency. But, because the story cast doubt on their truthfulness, it also had the effect of saying, "Hey, enough about Bush's supposedly wayward past."

THE *JOURNAL* STORY'S immediate effect was to encourage other outlets to repeat the rumors. The *Los Angeles Times* wrote: "*The Wall Street Journal* reports that rumors are flying about Texas Gov. George W. Bush being high at his father's presidential inaugural." *The Times* of London wrote: "*The Wall Street Journal* yesterday relayed unsubstantiated gossip that Mr. Bush had taken drugs and might have been photographed dancing naked on a bar in his youth." Although a few commentators—including Jeffrey Birnbaum, Washington bureau chief of *Fortune* (and a former *Journal* reporter)—said the *Journal*'s piece would help Bush, most said that the story was irresponsible and would damage Bush. "[N]ow we can look forward to a week's worth of talking heads explaining what it all means," complained Bush's first cousin John Ellis in a newspaper column. Even Jay Leno professed shock: "I can't believe *The Wall Street Journal* even prints this," he told his TV audience—and then joked that "[t]he only time anyone in the Bush family has ever been high was when they picked Dan Quayle as vice president."

The *Journal*'s rationale for publishing the rumors about Bush was fairly weak. "At least 37 newspapers and magazines have run articles and editorials gingerly raising the drug issue," wrote *Journal* reporter Ellen Joan Pollock, "mostly by noting that Mr. Bush declines to answer questions about drug use or other youthful misdeeds." The drug issue had also been raised in "Doonesbury" and on CNN and CNBC, Pollock wrote. True enough. But it was a stretch to claim that the most sensational rumor mentioned in the article—that Bush was high (on cocaine) at his father's inauguration—was in general circulation. Although Pollock called it a "gossip-

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circuit favorite," *I* hadn't heard the rumor. (I live in Washington, write a gossipy online column, and formerly worked as a reporter in the *Journal*'s D.C. bureau.) Neither had the five top editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC. A quick search on the Nexis database confirms that the cocaine-inauguration rumor hadn't appeared in print or on television before the *Journal* published it.

Well, so what? Didn't the *Journal* also tell its readers that the rumor wasn't true? Not exactly. It said that two Bush partisans—Mary Matalin, who worked on Bush *père*'s 1988 campaign with George W., and Clay Johnson, his director of appointments—both *say* that it isn't true, based on having spent much of the 1989 Inauguration Day in George W.'s company. Granted, their comments do serve to make it seem very, very unlikely that the rumor *is* true. And, certainly, lacking any evidence to the contrary, it really wouldn't be fair to give such an outlandish rumor much credence. But that isn't a refutation. As a general rule, it's impossible to prove that something *didn't* happen. And, for virtually all of the *Journal*'s readers, the question wouldn't even have come up if the *Journal* hadn't brought it up.

WHAT MADE THE *Journal* story especially provocative was its appearance just a few months after the conclusion of Bimbroglio. For good or ill, Bimbroglio conditioned reporters to believe that vicious gossip tends to be true. Press critics like Steven Brill and Pete Hamill thundered at the time that unsubstantiated rumors were finding their way into the mainstream media. They were certainly right to criticize reporters' sloppy habit of considering a rumor publishable if it had already been reported in a halfway-respectable media outlet. But the most outlandish of these rumors—that Monica Lewinsky had kept a blue dress stained with the president's semen—turned out to be fact. In that context, even a story claiming to cast doubt on rumors about George W. Bush couldn't help having the opposite effect. Bill Clinton received oral sex in the Oval Office. Might it also be true that George W. Bush has consumed illegal drugs?

Actually, given what Bush has said on the matter, it would be a surprise to learn that Bush *hasn't* used illegal drugs at least once in his life. Four days before the *Journal* piece appeared, the following exchange occurred between Bush and Diane Sawyer on "Good Morning America":

> Sawyer: You said you stopped drinking when you were forty?
> Bush: Yes.
> Sawyer: Stopped smoking. You are a born-again Christian. You also said, however, that you're a man who used to take a drink.
> Bush: Yes, I did.
> Sawyer: And that Mrs. Bush had to remind you that you had to make a choice about that. When the subject of drugs came up—comes up—you say, "Won't talk about it, not going to do an answer to it."
> Bush: Because there's a Washington game that tries to get people like me to chase every rumor. See, the game is to try to destroy somebody's reputation. And what I'm going to tell people is that twenty to thirty years ago, I made mistakes. But what people need to know about me is that I've learned from my mistakes. And there needs to be a consistent message from people in my generation that says to kids, "Drugs will destroy your life, abusing alcohol will destroy your life as well."
> Sawyer: It's going to leave the implication, of course, that you did drugs.
> Bush: People can float every rumor they want....

What the *Journal*'s extensive interviews with Bush's college and business-school cronies failed to establish—i.e., that Bush ever took drugs—is given some credence here by Bush himself. Although one can't take this exchange as *proof* that Bush has at some time in his life consumed illegal drugs, he does *seem* to be telegraphing to his audience the message that, yes, he did drugs, just like practically every other baby boomer in America (including Al Gore and Bill Clinton); that he's very sorry he did; and that he doesn't want to talk about it. A more difficult question is whether the likely drug in question was marijuana (which is what Gore and Clinton have admitted to) or something more serious, like cocaine. If it was just marijuana, why not come clean and join in the unofficial marijuana amnesty granted candidates in 1988 after Douglas Ginsburg's confessed drug usage cost him a seat on the Supreme Court? If it was cocaine, well, aren't there a lot of boomers who tried that, too?

A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR Bush's silence would be an intuition that the press is more hypocritical and has a larger appetite for scandal than it did a decade ago. In *Feeding Frenzy*, a 1991 book about the tendency for scandal to consume political coverage, author Larry Sabato tells an engaging story from the 1988 presidential campaign about how Bruce Babbitt defused his own drug confession. Babbitt approached *Washington Post* reporter Maralee Schwartz and said: "I hear the subject of the day is marijuana. What about it, Maralee, have you ever used it?" Schwartz said she had. She asked Babbitt whether he had, and Babbitt said "yes." Could such a civil exchange occur today? It's possible that, if Bush were to try a similar challenge, the reporter would elevate it into a major offense.

Instead, Bush is playing a different card by publicizing that he is a born-again Christian. "Faith changes lives," Bush told Fred Barnes in a March 22 *Weekly Standard* profile. Even granting that the *Weekly Standard* is a conservative journal of opinion, the piece went to great lengths to inoculate Bush against embarrassing revelations yet to come. "I grew up in the church, but I didn't always walk the walk," Bush told Barnes. Meaning what? Barnes observed that Bush's story "is not quite as vivid as that of some born-again Christians, who tell of their prior, sinful life in rich detail." Gee, why not? Could it be that, unlike other born-again Christians, George Bush is *running for president*? Barnes continued: "Bush merely says his life lacked meaning, there was 'something missing inside my soul,' and he drank too much. 'I was not an alcoholic,' he insists." Here, at least, Bush seemed to be offering up unwitting evidence that he really *wasn't* an alcoholic, or at least had never spent much time in the "recovery" culture. If he had, he'd know the lingo better: not,

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"I wasn't an alcoholic," but, "I am not an alcoholic." (According to Alcoholics Anonymous, you never stop being an alcoholic; you merely become a "recovering alcoholic.")

In addition to being vague, the story of Bush's spiritual journey, as related by Barnes, is not especially convincing. Bush drank too much, but he wasn't an alcoholic; but on the day after his fortieth birthday celebration he had a hangover that "was bad enough for him to declare that he would stop drinking." Also, his wife had been "urging" him to quit. Not pleading, not threatening, just urging, like you would urge your husband to get a haircut. That Bush rededicated himself to Christ is not particularly hard to believe (he'd been spending time with Billy Graham at his father's Kennebunkport home). What's hard to believe is Bush's Slough of Despond as described by Barnes. Could it be that this is some sort of placeholder narrative awaiting revelations by the press of more lurid details?

If the media now dig up anything damaging about Bush's wild youth, Bush can say, "I *told* you, I'm not the man I was." The press might not be willing to buy it, having been burned by Clinton's similar protestations in 1992. But, assuming the offense is drug use, the press should buy it—if only because, unlike extramarital sex, it's a compulsion that men tend to outgrow. Here's my proposal for a provisional post-Bimbroglio consensus on the Bush rumors: A long time ago, Bush took drugs. We can't prove this, but we believe this. And we don't care. ■

Overworked young M.D.s.

Asleep on the Job

By JOSHUA M. SHARFSTEIN

TO ANYONE WHO has watched "ER" or heard the horror stories of bleary-eyed medical residents, the tale of Geraldine Houston and Dina McLellan will seem familiar. Pediatricians-in-training at a regional hospital, the pair each worked 115 hours a week taking care of critically ill children. But, unlike thousands of other residents who have toiled under comparably grueling schedules, one day Houston and McLellan decided they couldn't take it anymore. So they called a press conference.

NBC's television drama to the contrary, such attempts to buck the traditional system of medical training are hardly par for the course. Yet Houston and McLellan had the backing of their professional medical association, and it paid off. In front of reporters invited by the medical society, Houston made her case: "There is a very real danger to the premature babies in our care.... We have been seconds away from administering a toxic dose of drugs in the middle of the night because we have not slept for twenty-four hours." Sympathetic media accounts followed—"TIRED DOCTORS 'SECONDS FROM FATAL ERRORS'" read one headline—and eventually the hospital agreed to hire additional staff to share the load.

This victory might seem like an instructive and optimistic tale—a road map for defusing a serious public health threat that has stubbornly persisted despite widespread press coverage and several legislative attempts to end it. Yet two key facts explain why the efforts of Drs. Houston and McLellan, which occurred in 1990, will not soon be replicated at a teaching hospital near you: first, the story took place in Scotland, and, second, the sympathetic medical society was the British Medical Association. While U.S. hospitals can provide the most advanced care in the world, our medical establishment remains wedded to an excessively grueling, risky, and outdated system of training new physicians.

JUST AS IT is no secret that physicians in training work long hours, it is no secret that sleep deprivation is hardly conducive to optimal job performance. Extensive experimental evidence suggesting that fatigue causes medical errors is corroborated by data from adverse event reporting and by interviews with residents (60 percent of whom in one study thought long hours impaired the quality of care, and 40 percent of whom in another study had seen a colleague's work impaired by fatigue). All this evidence hasn't stopped some physicians from claiming that residents are immune to sleep deprivation, but such claims do not stand up to scrutiny. For example, defenders of the status quo often cite a study that appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1988—a study that concluded that surgical residents scored no different on a battery of cognitive tests whether or not they had rested at least four hours the night before. But the research had one salient flaw: even when the residents had rested the previous night (and so were considered "not sleep deprived"), they were still working a 100-plus-hour week.

While some physicians accept the implications of sleep deprivation on patient care, few are willing to question a system that has trained so many doctors—and still protects senior physicians from long nights of hospital call. These attitudes matter because medical professional associations have so much influence over resident training. Even when these groups *have* responded to common sense calls for reform in resident hours, the new guidelines they've issued are so full of loopholes as to be virtually meaningless.

In 1988, for example, the executive council of the Association of American Medical Colleges recommended that "in order that decisions about the care of patients are not impaired by fatigue, resident hours actually worked should not exceed 80 hours per week when averaged over four weeks." But the council never defined the phrase "actually worked." Did time between answering calls from nurses count as work? What about time in the emergency department waiting for the next emergency? Massachusetts teaching hospitals proposed one answer to that question when they signed on to a voluntary code in 1988. During testimony before the state legislature, the guidelines' backers indicated that

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drawing blood from patients, filling out lab paperwork, and making notes in patients' charts didn't count toward "active patient care" limits of 80 hours per week—making the new limits essentially useless. "[With] 80 hours of active patient care, you may put in one hundred and ten hours in the hospital," explained Richard Egdahl, the chairman of the committee that wrote the guidelines.

Rules from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)—which oversees all residency programs—also suffer from the strange requirement that 80-hour work limits be averaged over four weeks. "This approach is irrational," wrote two physicians in the *Medical Journal of Australia*. "It is like saying you are fit to drive at any time if your blood alcohol level, averaged over four weeks, is less than 0.05%." In any event, ACGME doesn't even investigate individual training programs for violations.

Exacerbating the medical profession's failure to self-regulate is its poor compliance with externally composed regulations. After the death of a young woman at New York Hospital, the New York legislature in 1989 passed the so-called 405 code, which dictates that residents may work only 24 hours at a time and no more than 80 hours per week. But a series of surprise inspections at twelve New York hospitals in 1998 found that 37 percent of residents still worked more than 85 hours per week and that 60 percent of surgical residents worked more than 95 hours, with some reporting workloads of up to 126 hours in a week.

Even when training programs have complied with the letter of the law, many have made up for the restricted hours simply by requiring residents to cover more patients. Instead of a typical caseload of 15 to 20 patients over a 40-hour shift, some residents are expected to care for 80 patients over 14 hours. This, of course, has led to the same problems the law was intended to alleviate. A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found an increase in medical complications and test delays after resident hours were restricted. Likewise, a well-designed Boston study has demonstrated that serious medical errors are more common when residents are not very familiar with the patients they are caring for.

BENEATH THE RESISTANCE to change lies the premise that, whatever its flaws, the current system is better than the alternatives. This would be a fair assumption if there were data to support the notion that heroic work schedules are a necessary part of a physician's training. But no such data exist. Moreover, as recent examples from Great Britain and other countries attest, when the medical profession endorses efforts to reduce the workload of residents, innovation results. In the Netherlands, for instance, the Dutch government—after ten years of discussions with the national medical association—limited the workweek for residents to 60 hours in 1993; an additional 760 residents were hired to maintain patient coverage levels. In Denmark, collective agreements with physician groups have lowered the workweek for physicians in training from an average of 70 hours to fewer than 45. Rather than hire more residents, the Danish system has shifted some on-call work to senior physicians—an eminently reasonable solution that should have a role in U.S. reform.

Within two years, Australia will also radically revise resident schedules by following the lead of the nation's largest medical society. After its own investigation into the dangers of resident overwork, the Australian Medical Association in 1996 jointly organized the Safe Hours project with hospital representatives, consumer groups, and state health officials. Under the project's proposed code, hospitals may run afoul of occupational health laws if they cannot limit the workweek for residents to 70 hours, shift nonessential work to the daytime, and hire additional staff as needed.

The U.S. medical profession needs to take a similar lead in protecting patients against errors made by exhausted residents, but don't bet it will do so spontaneously. That's where the federal government comes in. Just as it has prodded the medical community to see the wisdom of encouraging careers in primary care, Congress can and should insist that professional organizations foster safer training programs.

FIRST, THE MEDICARE program should require teaching hospitals that receive funding for graduate medical education (virtually all receive millions of dollars annually) to report on their compliance with voluntary guidelines established by the ACGME by providing detailed hours data. Training programs that meet these professional standards should have nothing to fear; others will have to choose between changing their programs or lying to the federal government. Although current guidelines may be weak, the 80-hour limits are still less than what many residents work, and enforcing the rules will enhance control over residency education within the profession. What's more, resident applicants will be able to use the reported data to make informed decisions about what training programs really entail, while consumers can decide whether physician fatigue is an important concern at their chosen hospital.

Second, grants should be made available to hospitals to redesign training to meet strict hours and workload guidelines—while measuring the impact on cost, quality of resident training, and patient care. Financially strapped hospitals will be eager to use the funds to hire physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and phlebotomists—which in turn should reduce resident workloads. Outcome data from these experiments will not only demonstrate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of alternative models of medical education to the profession but will also create a cadre of researchers whose careers will be dedicated to safer models of medical education. Eventually, once research establishes effective ways to reduce resident hours while improving the quality of care, hospitals should be allowed to use Medicare funds to hire alternatives to residents, rather than residents alone.

These aren't quick fixes, but combined with other factors—including advocacy by unions representing residents and lawsuits resulting from highly publicized resident errors—they'll contribute to a cultural change within the profession and its associations. Perhaps, in the not too distant future, the story of Drs. McLellan and Houston will indeed resonate across the Atlantic. ■

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Israel's new religious centrists.

Challenging Orthodoxy

By MIRIAM UDEL LAMBERT

A WEEK BEFORE Ehud Barak's landslide victory in the campaign for Israeli prime minister, Michael Melchior, an Orthodox rabbi of Danish extraction, told a community hall filled with supporters of Barak's One Israel coalition about the biblical Noah. According to classical rabbinic exegesis, Noah emerged from the ark after the Flood, saw the waste all around, and challenged God as to how a merciful deity could have wrought such destruction. God counterchallenged: "*Now* you're asking?" God meant, Melchior explained, that, because Noah had feared that if he spoke for his wicked generation some of its taint would adhere to him, he had remained silent until it was too late.

Melchior is the leader of Meimad, an Orthodox religious social movement turned political party that joined forces with Labor and Gesher this year to form One Israel. Melchior and his colleagues in Meimad are concerned that their generation of Israelis is being rent not by wickedness but by ideological and religious differences. And they are hoping to learn from Noah's mistake and to risk the taint of political involvement so they can reach their generation before it is too late. This spring the group (whose name is an acronym in Hebrew for "A Jewish State, A Democratic State") made an unprecedented alliance with the traditionally secular Labor Party in hopes of bringing its message of secular-religious reconciliation to a wider audience and putting muscle behind its policy initiatives. Labor rewarded Meimad with a seat for Melchior in the next parliament, and Barak has promised a ministry to another Meimad leader. Not bad for a party whose voter base has been estimated at no more than 80,000—and possibly even fewer.

Meimad's significance, however, cannot be measured by numbers alone. It was organized by a rabbi named Yehuda Amital two months before the 1988 elections. But it soon stumbled after Amital lost a close bid for a Knesset seat. The group then went into hibernation until 1993, when it reemerged as a nonpartisan, educational public policy movement. But, with the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, many in the party felt they had to return to politics. And, when Shimon Peres sought to counteract the bitter resentment between the secular and religious by inviting Amital to join his transitional government as a sort of symbolic minister without portfolio, Amital gamely agreed. Amital was the ideal man for the job: as a hero in the war of independence, he had solid Zionist credentials, and he was also the founder of a system of yeshivas combining Torah study with army service.

When he joined the ministry, though, Amital could not continue leading Meimad, so the mantle passed to Melchior. During this period, a delegation of Meimad leaders met with a group of left-leaning secularists to forge a mutual understanding about the relationship between religion and state. Yossi Beilin, the Labor leader who helped engineer the Oslo accord, also worked on this task force. The resulting document, "A New Covenant on Religion and State," was released in February 1998. It addresses several aspects of synagogue-state tension, proposing guidelines that affirm both traditional Jewish and Western democratic values.

Meanwhile, the split between religious and secular Israelis continued to widen. In the spring of 1998, the leader of the National Religious Party (NRP) died, and that traditional bastion of religious Zionism passed into the hands of more hard-line rightists. In response, Meimad's leadership decided to mount a serious electoral campaign.

Although Meimad's moderately dovish stance on the peace process has attracted a lot of attention, Melchior says that "for us, the question is not where our borders are, but what happens inside them." Thus the group will focus on healing the rift between secular and religious Jews. Though when the movement was first formed there was little public awareness of this issue, today, Melchior points out, 80 percent of Israelis think this division is the worst existential problem facing the country. "Other splits in Israeli society," he says, "between right and left, between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews, are all subordinate to the religious-secular split."

IN THE VIEW of Meimad's leaders, this split is the result of both lifestyle and ideological changes among three groups: religious Zionists, ultra-Orthodox Jews, and secularists.

Rabbi Daniel Tropper, an active member of Meimad and the leader of an educational organization that promotes dialogue between secular and religious schoolchildren, sees the rightward shift of the NRP and its constituency as a reordering of principles: "There are three key Jewish values, in the following order," he explains. "The people of Israel, the Torah of Israel, and the land of Israel. After 1967, the priorities [of the religious Zionist community] became warped. The land took precedence over the people. They were willing to make any sacrifices." As far as the religious Zionists were concerned, any government that did not value the land above all else lost its claim to legitimacy. Thus religious Zionists, once strong supporters of state institutions, became increasingly critical of them. Furthermore, this sector tended to view political questions, such as the peace process, in terms of Jewish law. This rightward shift, says Tropper, has "created a need to say that the Torah does not equal right-wing politics."

The tension between the government and the religious has also been exacerbated by the growth of ultra-Orthodox groups. Israel's founders had adopted a laissez-faire approach to these *haredim*, agreeing, for instance, to give the Orthodox rabbinate control over marriages, divorces, con-

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versions, and burials, and to exempt ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students from army service. But, when the latter policy was formulated, the number of exemptions was fairly small; now that it affects tens of thousands of young men, it has become a major political issue. When the activist Supreme Court ruled earlier this year to end the exemptions, tens of thousands of ultra-Orthodox took to the streets in livid protest. Their rhetoric discounted the Supreme Court as "racist" and "anti-Semitic." (Meimad was at the mostly secular counterprotest that day, bearing signs that read, "WE ARE WITH YOU IN DEMOCRACY" and "WE ARE WITH YOU IN JUSTICE.")

Meanwhile, the lifestyles of secular Jews have evolved to the point that they have begun to chafe under the rabbinate's control, perceiving it as religious coercion. Instead of secularism stemming from a conscious choice to reject the religion of one's parents, Tropper notes, "there are now fourth-generation secular Jews who are very distant from tradition. It used to be obvious that a wedding should be conducted by an Orthodox rabbi. That is no longer the case." Furthermore, he adds, society and leisure have changed. "Fifty years ago, no one wanted to open stores or coffeehouses on the Sabbath," he recalls. "People used to sit at home and read, maybe listen to the radio. Now they go to parties every week." Meimad believes that a coerced religious act is meaningless and so hopes to reduce the power of the rabbinate over individuals' lives. But it also wants to present a more compassionate face of Judaism. And Melchior says that "the Torah is not something to be narrowed down to the borders of Israel. It speaks to education, the relationship to the Other, democracy, health services, the gap between the poor and the rich."

MEIMAD'S GOALS ARE guided by this belief that the Torah is relevant to contemporary issues. Regarding the Sabbath, the group would like to see commercial, business, and manufacturing sites close but cultural and recreational sites remain open along with public transportation to those sites (depending on the sensitivities of individual neighborhoods). Outgoing Knesset member and Meimad supporter Alex Lubotzky explains: "According to Jewish law, there's no difference between desecrating the Sabbath by shopping at a mall or going to a beach, but we want Shabbat to feel different, to have a different character. We'd like something like the European model. In Switzerland, businesses are closed on Sunday, but nobody claims Switzerland isn't a democracy." The party wishes for similarly moderate changes in students' curriculum: all government-funded schools will be required to present material covering traditional Jewish texts and values on the one hand, as well as democracy and human rights on the other. Meimad's leaders are also eager to change the fact that girls' high schools and seminaries for women receive about half as much funding as male yeshivas.

Already there are signs that, in the wake of last month's elections, Meimad may have a positive impact. For one thing, the tenor of public discourse has changed; Barak quoted verses from Scripture and passages from Maimonides in his acceptance speech. Though some feel Meimad could have done better by bargaining as a small independent party than by joining the alliance, most of the party leaders feel they will gain more influence by being in the prime minister's own party. (It is also questionable whether Meimad would have won any seats in the parliament by running on its own.) Moreover, Meimad has assurances that there will be no action on religion-state or education issues without its consent. If the alliance ever backfires, Meimad can simply take its Knesset seat and its government funding and leave.

Meanwhile, as Barak has gone about forming his governing coalition, the NRP, whose number of seats declined with the new elections, has sounded ready to work with Barak and downright sanguine about Meimad's role. NRP candidate Nissan Slomiansky claims that Barak's alliance with Meimad shows that Barak understands Labor made a "fatal mistake" during Rabin's tenure by building a coalition with the Arab parties while ignoring the religious, and that Barak will now try to bring the NRP back to the governing fold. "He acted wisely in joining with Meimad, because it showed he cares about the religious," Slomiansky says. "But they're still left of most religious Zionists. He needs the NRP to be truly centrist." The ultra-Orthodox may still be out in the cold, though, since the secularist Meretz and Shinui parties have both declared they won't sit in a coalition with the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party. However, Shas leader Aryeh Deri, who was convicted on corruption charges earlier this year, has resigned his seat in the new Knesset. This concession may be enough for Barak to wangle some sympathy for admitting Shas into the ruling majority.

MEIMAD'S FONDEST WISH, according to Tropper, is to sit down with representatives of a range of perspectives and draft a new accord that would deal simultaneously with all the major issues that fall under the heading of religion and state. This agreement would then become law. But, even if One Israel does not generate such an agreement, Meimad plays a significant role in balancing competing political forces. Squarely in Barak's camp, Meimad is a counter-voice to the other religious parties, all aligned with the right, be they religious Zionists or ultra-Orthodox. The party also counteracts the explicitly antireligious influences of Meretz and Shinui. But Yonina Fallenberg, one of Meimad's candidates, wants the group to go a step further. "We're now aligned with the secular world, but that's only half the work," Fallenberg says. "We must turn back to the ultra-Orthodox world. We're standing where we can understand everybody's side."

Meimad is also poised to serve Israeli society in a less tangible role by symbolizing religious commitment synthesized with intellectual openness. Moreover, by its willingness to stake out complex, nuanced political positions, the party challenges those to its left and right to do the same. This may give rise to a new kind of mutual accountability. "As partners," says Tropper, "the secular will have to struggle with the Jewish nature of the state, and the religious will have to struggle with the concept of individual freedom. The question is, can we work it out together?" ■

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GOP isolationism reborn.

Beyond National Interest

By JOHN B. JUDIS

ALTHOUGH THE TERM "national interest" leaves plenty of room for interpretation, those who invoke it almost always mean to define it narrowly. And so it should come as no surprise that, in the debate over U.S. intervention in Kosovo, the appeals to "national interest" have come almost entirely from those who oppose not just the Clinton administration's execution of the campaign but the very decision to carry on the campaign in the first place. "I believe that the single greatest challenge in foreign policy as we head into the next century is our ability to define vital national interests of the United States," Republican Representative John Kasich declared during the March 11 House debate over American intervention in Kosovo, just prior to casting a vote to prohibit even a peacekeeping force. First-term Republican Heather Wilson echoed Kasich's sentiments. "There are several questions that I asked myself and that I will share with the members.... What is [the] threat to U.S. security or to U.S. vital national interests? Clearly, there is no threat to U.S. security directly, so we are talking about vital U.S. national interests," Wilson concluded as she, too, voted to bar any forces.

In making these appeals, Republicans like Kasich and Wilson—as well as Tom DeLay, Trent Lott, and Don Nickles—need not fear reprisal from the press or public. To ask how a foreign policy adventure is going to benefit us directly strikes most people as reasonable, if not downright patriotic. But, strange though it may sound, there is something distinctly un-American about strict appeals to the national interest. American foreign policy has always claimed to serve some broader ideal of America's destiny and moral mission in the world. At its best, American foreign policy has been a fusion of national interest and moral conviction—a fusion that was most clearly expressed in this century by Woodrow Wilson. It informed the country's conduct during the cold war and has most recently formed the basis of the Clinton administration's policy in Kosovo.

By invoking the national interest, the Republican critics of Kosovo intervention are not the true heirs to the American tradition of foreign policy. Quite the contrary, their words echo the realpolitik of continental Europe and the discredited strategy of the interwar Republicans—a strategy that until recently went under the more derogatory heading of "isolationism."

Although Alexander Hamilton invoked the national interest in 1793 to reject American intervention on behalf of the revolutionary French, few other statesmen have based their policy primarily on this standard in the past 200 years. In 1934, the historian and isolationist Charles Beard appealed to national interest as part of his argument for insulating the United States from the economy and the diplomatic and military rivalries of Europe; German émigré Hans Morgenthau made it the centerpiece of a new foreign policy realism in his 1951 work, *In Defense of the National Interest*. But, even during these decades, it never became a common term of popular political debate. Instead, it retained a specialized, faintly foreign aura similar to the terms "state power" or "proletariat." And it has always enjoyed far greater popularity in Europe—Bismarck, for example, was a proud defender of *Interessenpolitik*.

This is not to say that the concept of "interest" is alien to American economic and political thought. The idea of democratic pluralism is rooted in the idea of competing interests. But in foreign policy interest has never triumphed so singularly. Instead, religious and moral objectives have always occupied a higher place. In the very beginning, our conception of ourselves was explicitly religious and Protestant. The early settlers from England envisaged America as a model Christian community—a "city on a hill," in John Winthrop's words—that would set an example for the rest of the world to follow. Americans were the "chosen people" who would establish a "new Israel" or a "new Eden."

In the centuries since then, Americans have retained the conviction that we have a special moral or religious mission. In his farewell address in 1796, George Washington said that America's role was to give "mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence." Two centuries later, and in considerably more prosaic language, then-national security adviser Anthony Lake proclaimed that "we are fulfilling a timeless mission" and a "special role in the world ... to safeguard and strengthen the community of democracies and open markets."

To the extent that this philosophy has evolved over the past 200 years, the change has taken place not in the underlying objective but in the means by which we strive to achieve it. Originally, Americans believed that they could best change the world by serving as an example to other nations, avoiding what Thomas Jefferson called "entangling alliances" with European states. Except within the Americas, the United States did not seek directly to exercise its power or influence over other nations. In response to appeals to aid the Greek revolutionaries in 1821, John Quincy Adams famously declared that America must be "the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all" but "the champion and vindicator only of her own."

In this century, by contrast, Americans, flush with newfound industrial and military might, began to imagine that they could remake the world directly. Senator Albert Beveridge declared in 1900, "God has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the redemption of the world." In February 1941, *Time* founder and editor Henry Luce christened the "American Century." "It now becomes our time," Luce wrote, "to be the powerhouse from which the ideals spread throughout the world and do their mysterious

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work of lifting the life of mankind from the level of beasts to what the Psalmist called a little lower than the angels." In 1991, after America's success in the Gulf war, President Bush boasted of a "next American century." The war, Bush declared, showed that "America holds a special place in history. As we preserved and strengthened our own democracy, we've sought to extend the blessings of liberty throughout the world."

Revisionist historians contend that alleged moral or religious objectives in American foreign policy merely cloak a more crass campaign of economic self-interest, with a healthy dose of old-fashioned imperialism thrown in. Sometimes, these interpretations have courted absurdity—as when revisionists attributed America's intervention in Vietnam to a desire for secure supplies of tin and tungsten. But, at other times, they have revealed an important dimension of American politics. One purpose of the Marshall Plan, for example, was to provide markets for America's burgeoning surplus. Just as surely, there would have been no Gulf war without a threat to the world's oil supply.

Yet even here historians have frequently mistaken a part for the whole. The Marshall Plan, after all, also had another purpose: to create a democratic community of nations that could withstand the blandishments of left-wing totalitarianism. Saddam Hussein was an economic menace, but he was a bully and a tyrant, too—and it was only by appealing to Americans' sense of moral indignation that Bush secured sufficient backing for Operation Desert Storm.

THE DEFINING MOMENTS of American foreign policy have occurred when economic motives and military concerns have been fused together with moral and religious considerations. And in our time, the key figure in developing this approach was Woodrow Wilson. Wilson viewed America as having a special mission in the world. "We are chosen, and prominently chosen, to show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty," Wilson declared during the 1912 campaign. What he sought to achieve in foreign policy was a world order that avoided, on the one hand, the armed imperial rivalries that he believed produced World War I and, on the other hand, the socialist revolutions that Lenin believed were the only alternative to capitalist war. Wrote historian Gordon Levin in *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics*, "Wilsonian ideology sought essentially to end traditional imperialism and the balance of power, without socialist revolution, by reforming world politics from within."

Wilson wanted to remake the world in the image of America's post-Civil War democratic capitalism. He wanted to carry out America's special mission to transform the world, but he also believed that, within this pacific world order, American commercial and manufacturing ingenuity would emerge triumphant. When an American enters the world of

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commerce, Wilson explained in 1916, "he comes without any arms that would enable him to conquer by force, but only with those peaceful influences of intelligence, a desire to serve, a knowledge of what he is about, before which everything softens and yields and renders itself subject."

Wilson's first step was to bind the democratic nations of the West together in a new "community of power" that could promote democracy and prevent the outbreak of war. That was to be the League of Nations. Wilson was naïve about the immediate prospects for disarmament and international organization, but history vindicated him when it came to the feasibility of world capitalism without imperial rivalry or socialist revolution. His vision of democratic community and postimperial capitalism has informed American foreign policy since World War II, particularly since the collapse of Soviet communism.

Belatedly, and inconsistently, Clinton has embraced his own brand of Wilsonianism. Early on, Clinton vacillated between promoting "global democratic revolution" and ignoring foreign policy except as it impinged upon domestic economics, with disastrous results in Bosnia and East Asia. Then, in September 1993, Clinton's national security adviser, Anthony Lake, finally laid out a comprehensive foreign policy. During the cold war, Lake explained in a speech at Johns Hopkins University, the United States devoted its attention to defending market democracies against communism. With the cold war over, the United States could now turn its attention to the "enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies." Lake's strategy of "engagement and enlargement" rested upon working multilaterally with a "core of major market democracies" to extend democracy to neighboring states that were emerging either from communism or from capitalist dictatorship.

In Western Europe, for instance, the enlargement of NATO was intended to incorporate the Communist states of Eastern and Southern Europe into this new democratic order. Citing "Woodrow Wilson's most profound insights," Lake argued that, by expanding democracy in this manner, the United States would simultaneously promote prosperity and prevent war. "The expansion of market-based economies abroad helps expand our exports and create American jobs.... The addition of new democracies makes us more secure, because democracies tend not to wage war on each other," he explained.

The administration's intervention in the Balkans has reflected this strategy. It is not only about America's special moral mission in the world but also about transforming NATO from a military alliance against communism into an instrument for spreading democracy and pluralism in Eastern and Southern Europe. As Clinton put it last March, the intervention is "about values" and about creating "a Europe that is undivided, democratic, and free."

LIKE WILSONIAN INTERNATIONALISM, isolationism has evolved over the decades. Those who were called isolationists during World War I differed profoundly in their outlook from their successors. Robert LaFollette, George Norris, and other Republican Progressives argued that, by entering World War I, the United States was neither strengthening democracy against autocracy nor countering great-power imperialism, but merely taking the side of one imperialist alliance against another. They backed Wilson's objective of creating a new non-imperialist world capitalism; they thought it could best be accomplished by the United States remaining a mediator rather than a participant. In this sense, their differences with Wilson were more tactical than philosophical.

The isolationists of the 1920s and '30s, by contrast, rejected the Wilsonian premise altogether. They wanted the United States to insulate itself from the Old World's economic and military affairs. They argued for a kind of defensive autarky rooted in an illusion of economic self-sufficiency. Historian Justus Doenecke wrote of these isolationists:

> Since the 1920s, they had believed that the American interior contained such an abundance of resources that the country could avoid European commitments. An economic axis of agriculture and industry, the linking, so to speak, of Duluth grain elevators and Pittsburgh steel mills, would ensure national self-sufficiency.

As Hitler began open warfare in Europe in September 1939, the isolationists argued for the United States to remain not merely neutral but detached from the conflict. By staying out of the conflict, Republican Senator William Borah argued, the United States "will have rendered to all nations and all peoples a service far greater than it will ever be possible for us to render by joining any nation, or nations, in carrying on war."

AFTER WORLD WAR II, Republican isolationists did not discount the threat of Soviet communism, but they sought to counter it by creating a superior Air Force that could intimidate the Soviet Union and by extirpating Communists from positions of influence in the American government and society. They were not interested in rebuilding Europe or in fostering a democratic community of nations. They were critical of American participation in the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, and they opposed the establishment of NATO. While some of them retained the idealism of nineteenth-century isolationism, others, like the isolationists Doenecke described, reduced foreign policy to narrow economic considerations. As Stanford sociologist Lynn Eden explained, they were "business nationalists" who saw the emergence of a Wilsonian world capitalism as a threat to their livelihood.

They were concentrated in the Midwest and Rocky Mountain states and were themselves small businessmen who saw themselves as representing other small businessmen. Kenneth Wherry, the Republican whip in the Senate, owned an auto agency, a funeral parlor, and a furniture store in Nebraska. Hugh Butler, another Nebraska senator, owned a grain mill. Senator Homer Capehart of Indiana sold jukeboxes. They saw exports as creating shortages at home. They worried that agricultural relief shipments overseas would deprive their livestock of feed. Writing in 1952, historian Arthur Schlesinger distinguished this isolationism from the

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earlier isolationism of LaFollette and Norris: "The one was moved by hope for America, the other by hatred of Europe. The one shunned Europe the better to change America, the other, the better to keep America from changing."

AS A SPECIES, the Republican isolationists seemed to vanish after Dwight Eisenhower defeated Robert Taft for the presidential nomination in 1952. And, today, several Republicans—Indiana Senator Richard Lugar and Arizona Senator John McCain, for example—are the distinct heirs to the tradition of Eisenhower and his secretary of state, John Foster Dulles. But in recent years a new generation of Republicans has picked up where the 1940s isolationists left off, reducing foreign policy to the narrowest of considerations and repudiating America's unique mission in the world.

Of course, it is clearly unfair to identify every opponent of American overseas intervention as an isolationist. During the '60s, for example, opponents of the Vietnam War were often accused of being isolationists, when, in fact, they were objecting to the war on what were largely Wilsonian grounds—that it was a war not to make "the world safe for democracy" but to prop up a corrupt South Vietnamese autocracy. And, similarly, today there are opponents of our current intervention in Kosovo who object not to what we are trying to accomplish but to how we are trying to accomplish it.

Many of today's conservative Republicans, however, are explicitly rejecting Wilsonian principles of foreign policy. Like the Republicans of the late '40s, they oppose American participation in international organizations. They have consistently opposed funding for the United Nations and have then declared themselves vindicated when the U.N.'s poorly-funded peacekeeping operations have foundered. They have opposed the IMF—not because it imposes draconian conditions on debtor nations but because it expends funds on them. They have opposed intervention except in the Gulf, when oil was at stake.

They have consistently opposed any American role in the Balkans. In December 1995, for instance, 190 out of 232 House Republicans voted to prohibit any funds for troops in Bosnia. When it comes to Kosovo, they have made stark distinctions between Europe's problems and America's. As Representative Howard Coble put it:

> I don't mean to portray myself as an isolationist, but to suggest that Bosnia and Kosovo are European problems that should be resolved by Europeans hardly constitutes isolationism. It is isolationism light at its best, if that. I just believe that we do not need to insert our oars into those waters, and I don't mean to come across as uncaring or indifferent to the problems plaguing Europe, but doggone it, it is indeed a European problem. Let our European friends handle it unless it becomes a situation that causes United States national security to be exposed.

This isolationist position finds intellectual haven at prominent think tanks representing the mainstream conservative movement, including the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, and at the U.S. Business and Industrial Council, a small organization that is a lineal descendant of the old business nationalists. Any hint of a broader American moral mission in the world disappears in their formulations. Cato's Ted Galen Carpenter wrote of Bosnian intervention in 1996:

> From the standpoint of American interests, what matters in Europe is the conduct of the handful of major powers. As long as those states remain at peace with one another, and no menacing would-be hegemonic power emerges, there is no credible danger to America's security. Events involving minor countries such as Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia may create annoyances, but they do not disrupt the European balance of power or the overall stability of the Continent.

Writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, Carpenter and Alan Tonelson of the Business and Industrial Council reject American intervention on behalf of Haiti, Cambodia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and other "failed states":

> The failed states involved fit no traditional definition of vital or even significant U.S. interests. None is militarily strong enough to threaten America or its major allies. None is a significant market for U.S. goods or a major site for U.S. investment.

These arguments represent, in effect, a reduction of American foreign policy to a simple test of whether a foreign country threatens the United States militarily or represents a "significant market for U.S. goods or a major site for U.S. investment." It is a foreign policy of bomb shelters and bank balances.

MAKE NO MISTAKE: To defend the Kosovo intervention's Wilsonian premise does not entail defending the Clinton administration's application of it. The current military campaign could well leave the Kosovar Albanians worse off and NATO less able to serve as a force for the enlargement of democracy and the prevention of tyranny.

What's more, there are other elements of Clintonian foreign policy that smack more of a new "dollar diplomacy" than of anything Wilsonian. When it comes to China, for example, the administration's agenda rests almost entirely on the promotion of American business there. It inverts the principles of Wilson's foreign policy: Wilson never argued that, by becoming more capitalist, a country would become more pacific; he argued that, by becoming democratic, a country would be less likely to go to war against its neighbors and seek empire for its own sake. Whether correct or not, this proposition suggests a different China policy from the one the Clinton administration has undertaken.

But to misunderstand and misapply Wilson's framework is one thing; to repudiate it entirely is quite another. Whatever its faults, the Clinton administration has continued the centuries-old effort by Americans to create a just and benevolent world—an effort that, in the view of this last century, cannot simply be dismissed as a utopian delusion. Today's Republican conservatives, cloaking their convictions in a concern for "vital national interest," have turned their backs on the world and on America's special role within it. ■

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Does it help to have been the vice president?

Training Time

By RICHARD E. NEUSTADT

DOES IT HELP to have been vice president? With respect to sharing in government and later becoming president, the answer to that question would have been strongly "no" as recently as 50 years ago. Until the 1950s, American vice presidents had been in the position of crown princes in most monarchies: confined to asking daily, as one of ours once said, about the ruler's health and otherwise excluded from the real business of government. But nowadays the answer would be "yes." From being a pathetic appendage of Congress with but two constitutional functions—to preside over the Senate and to break tie votes—our vice presidency has become for most incumbents a functioning, high-level element in executive decision-making and also in implementation, to varying degrees, as each president sees fit.

The change owes its beginnings to the shock of Harry Truman's takeover from Franklin Roosevelt without any preparation. Truman's vice presidential successor, Alben Barkeley, was the first to be a statutory member of the then-new National Security Council (although, as a "legislative officer," which is what he thought he was, he declined to attend most meetings). In the next administration, Dwight Eisenhower's, Richard Nixon was the first vice president to have a suite of lofty rooms, complete with personal staff, in the Old Executive Office Building. His predecessors had possessed only a relatively modest office at the Capitol. Jimmy Carter's vice president, Walter Mondale, was the first to gain an office in the West Wing of the White House itself. Mondale also was the first to be assured a weekly luncheon, agenda open, with the president in private. Once granted, these perquisites all stuck to the vice presidency, helping to transform it.

And Al Gore has been the first vice president, at least in modern times, to be invited into every sort of presidential meeting (assignations aside), free to argue with the president in front of others present—albeit not in public—whenever and on whatever topic the V.P. chose. Mondale once told me that he carefully abided by a rule he'd learned from Hubert Humphrey, who in turn apparently had drawn it from observing Lyndon Johnson as vice president and then living under him when he succeeded JFK: "Never be seen by anyone else to differ from the president, except by prearrangement and with his assent." This rule, it seems, evaporated in the (special?) case of Gore, in part, perhaps, because he and Bill Clinton had campaigned together from the same wing of the party and the same section of the country and in part, for sure, because of Clinton's unexampled generosity toward his own choice of successor.

Since Nixon's time in the vice presidency, all save Spiro Agnew seem to have amassed a working knowledge, though in variable depth, of policies and politics across the board at the presidential level. This was bound to stand them in good stead if they took on the presidency in their own right—as George Bush actually did, along with Nixon on his second try, and LBJ as well as Gerald Ford by succession. But Nelson Rockefeller, Walter Mondale, and Dan Quayle were stopped short. The vice presidency, plainly, is of less use in campaigning for the top spot than in settling down to it after election.

If Gore is nominated and elected president next year—a strong possibility, though not, of course, assured—he will be sworn into office after eight years as vice president, ranking in that status with Bush and Nixon in the twentieth century, and with Martin Van Buren on a four-year basis in the nineteenth. What might that mean should Gore take office? Are the comparisons worthwhile? The questions may sound academic, but I think they're worth posing (and not just because, as readers should know, I was Gore's college instructor and have kept up with him since).

GORE WILL HAVE been a new-style veep: eight years of an office in the West Wing of the White House, eight years of weekly lunches with the president alone, eight years of active participation in the NSC and other Cabinet-level groups, and eight years of managing a staff as large as the whole White House's during Truman's presidency. These do not necessarily make Gore different from Van Buren, who compensated for the lack of all these modern perquisites by having been a central member of Andrew Jackson's kitchen cabinet. But it makes them at least equals in White House experience and presidential-level observation, equal to each other and to Bush and Nixon.

Does this give Gore an advantage if and when he starts to govern on January 20, 2001? Three swallows do not make a summer, nor are Van Buren, Bush, and Nixon good predictors of the course of a Gore presidency. Still, perhaps they tell us something, not sure but at least suggestive.

Van Buren's presidency, from 1837 to 1841, suggests that Gore had better beware the next recession if its onset is delayed until after he takes office, especially if it is long and severe. Not only did the long-lived depression of 1837 cloud Van Buren's entire presidency and haunt him through his unsuccessful campaign for reelection, but also the severity of the public's reactions drew upon well-founded perceptions

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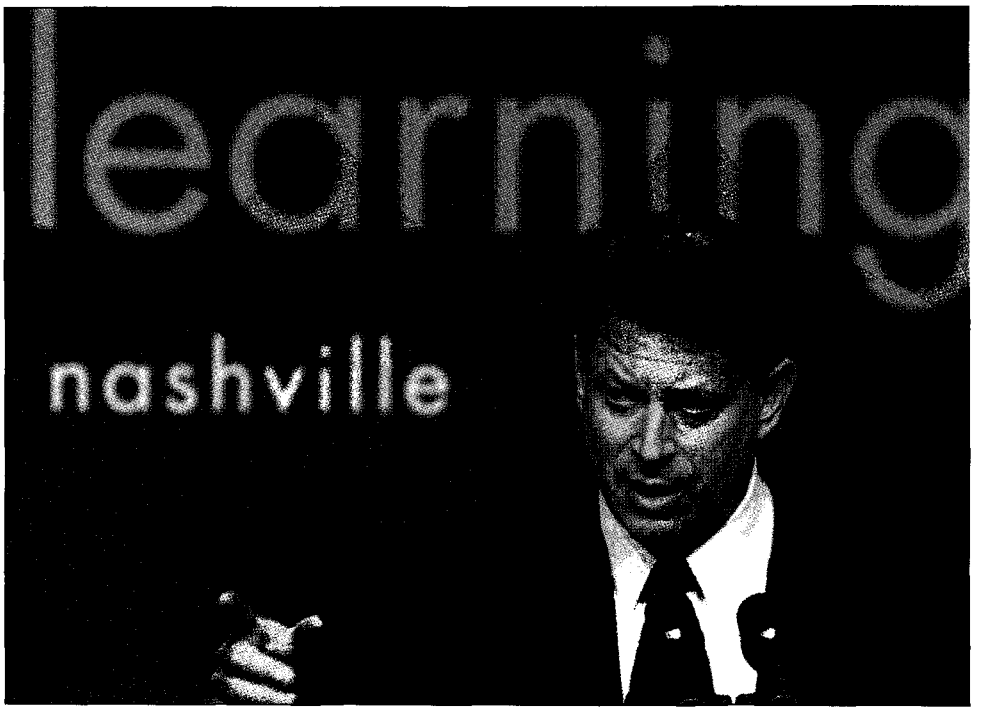
that Andrew Jackson's polices had set the stage for economic crisis—and that "Little Van" had been at Jackson's side throughout. Clinton's record may be harder to besmirch than Jackson's in that regard, but, if severe recession comes soon after he goes, I wouldn't bet on it.

Bush's presidency suggests at least two things about Gore's, should there be a Gore administration: first, in the spheres of policy and management that he cares most about, has most enjoyed so far and most relishes in prospect, the new president would be poised to proceed in both appointments and policy directions with an assuredness, a flexibility, a deftness of touch almost unknown to new administrations led by inexperienced chiefs—inexperienced, that is, in mysteries of "the" executive—and a minimum of the appalling hubris that has characterized most new administrations since JFK breezed in and fell on his face over the Bay of Pigs.

With Bush, there were no such early disasters; foreign affairs was his specialty, as his well-chosen team, unusually compatible, faced a world about to be transformed. I refer not to the Gulf war, which came later, but to German reunification and, more generally, to the Soviet retreat from East Central Europe. Bush and his associates accomplished major policy shifts in their first year, accommodating to these great changes.

But, where Bush's personal experience was relatively thin, his interest relatively low, his instincts relatively insecure, or his mind fixed elsewhere, he could and did produce mistakes aplenty, especially in domestic affairs, sometimes even in appointments, and not only at the start but during the whole course of his administration: for example, his second chief of staff, to say nothing of that huge nomination night blunder, "Read my lips. . . ."



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A disastrous lurch in climate, or nuclear arming by potential terrorists, or an unexpected speedup in high-tech development further unsettling the communications world would undoubtedly leave a new President Gore well positioned to play Bush, or to outdo him, by responding on familiar ground. Gore didn't invent the Internet, but surely he understands its uses and potential better than most newsmen or politicians of his generation (to say nothing of their elders!). He has dealt seriously with arms control since entering the Senate almost a generation ago. And, while his views on global warming are still controversial in some quarters, he assuredly is interested, grounded, and well-informed.

What of Richard Nixon, the third "swallow" in this series and, indeed, a special sort for purposes of comparison? Nixon, although the first of modern vice presidents, never had a relationship with Eisenhower remotely as supportive as Gore's with Clinton or even Mondale's with Carter. Moreover, instead of succeeding Ike, Nixon narrowly lost to JFK, only becoming president himself eight years later after defeating Hubert Humphrey just as narrowly. Nixon then took office with a smoothness and a deftness—and a show of humility in just the right degree to suit his circumstances—that would have outshone Bush, except in one particular area. Nixon and national security assistant Henry Kissinger, for reasons never adequately explained, assumed that, while as patriots they could not repudiate Lyndon Johnson's war, dumping it on the Democrats, they were so much superior to Johnson and his people in toughness, ingenuity, imagination, and whatever else that, with newness and the valuable uncertainty it brings, they could gain an agreement with the North Vietnamese in just a year, an agreement that would keep South Vietnam going for a "decent interval." On this assumption Nixon and Kissinger based all their early tactics. In fact, it took them more than three and a half years.

That mistaken estimate was not a product of hubris in the Kennedy sense. Nor was it consequent on sheer inexperience combined with ebullience, like Clinton's early remarks on gays in the military. Rather, it seems to have welled up from within those two men, Nixon and Kissinger, expressive of their intellectual self-confidence—some would say arrogance—combined with close, critical, but only marginally involved views of Johnson's experience and resources (he a Democrat, they Republicans).

Had Nixon been elected in 1960 and made that sort of judgment with respect to something he inherited from Ike, no doubt there would have been in it more realism and less arrogance, as well as less reliance on the uses of newness. So Gore should escape that particular hazard. He is liable, however, to its opposite: misplaced defense of outworn positions with which he feels identified because his predecessor had pursued them (whatever Gore may privately have thought of them at the time). This is what cost Humphrey his election in 1968, clinging too long to Johnson's policy on North Vietnam, thus paving the way for Nixon.

Besides, there is the possibility that, despite Clinton's present standing in the polls, once his term nears its close, his retrospective popularity may sag as citizens mull over what

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they've come to know about him. The sag might be sufficient to relieve Gore of concern about supporting the outworn. To the contrary, it might make him, personally, seem vulnerable by association—which would place him in worse circumstances than even Nixon's successor. "What sort of man are you to have had him as a buddy for so long?" No one could hurl that at Gerald Ford.

WHAT IS THERE in the record of Gore's own vice presidency to suggest its uses should he gain the top spot for himself next year? Lacking answers myself, I'm intrigued by further questions.

The first intriguing question is where, if anywhere, in the whole spectrum of policy, both foreign and domestic, his experience lags, his interest flags, his knowledge is thin, and his attention wavers. The one time I saw President Bush in the White House (to discuss a wholly nonpolitical subject), I had the temerity to ask how he was finding it—this after he'd spent about a year in office. "Oh," he replied, "the foreign problems are fascinating ... just fascinating. But that domestic stuff...." He grimaced and trailed off. What, for Gore, is the equivalent "stuff"?

From afar, there is no means of knowing. The vice presidency itself affords no clue. For Gore has not merely been possessed of its modern perquisites all these years, but also he has exercised them, thanks to Clinton, with an intimate involvement in the president's official business and a freedom to speak up within the official family quite unparalleled, at least back to Van Buren. The memoirs so far published all agree on this. George Stephanopoulos even writes unself-consciously, without quotation marks, of Gore as one of the three "Principals" in the White House, a term I first heard used by David Gergen—in wonder and disbelief—when he rejoined the White House staff for the fourth time and discovered that in this administration, unlike those in which he'd served before, there were more "Principals" than one, the president.

No president can wall off any area of policy for long. If issues are serious enough, and controversial enough, they'll eventually reach him in some form or fashion. In the Clinton administration, that holds true for the vice president as well. Since Clinton reportedly prefers to mull things over, not decide them fast, and since the V.P. is a principal participant in mulling, regularly free to speak his mind and push his views, Gore, if he is nominated, will come to the election with seven and a half years of experience—in everything. What facets of it he yearns to put on the back burner should but probably won't become the focus of intense press inquiry during the campaign. As journalism, I fear, it is boring.

A second intriguing question concerns differences between Clinton and Gore. Differences there certainly have been in this administration, evidently plenty of them, up to the point of Clinton's decision, for instance, at the outset, about intervening in Bosnia—Gore for, Clinton against. That was widely reported. The memoirs testify to this and other differences as well, but, for the most part, only in general terms. In a notably leaky regime, how the specifics have been kept relatively private, at least for those of us who live beyond the Beltway, is a wonder—particularly since so many differences must have been aired in sessions with assorted aides or Cabinet members present. But such is the case, it seems, or perhaps the differences were fewer than is usually the case, or possibly the press corps has become so used to these as to regard them as no longer news. If the last, that's a pity, thinking of what voters have to do next year.

I once asked one of Gore's former aides—he's been vice president so long that there are many such—how she could tell when he and the president came down on different sides of the same question. "He never says," she answered. "He won't give us a clue. We have to watch his eyebrows. But then," she sighed, "they usually don't tell us anything." "Woodenness" thus has its uses.

A third intriguing question is about the level of frustration Gore, along with all his predecessors, has encountered in the second slot, and what, if any, are the scars left on his mind? In the modern vice presidency, all the preceding Democrats led deeply frustrating, greatly constrained lives. They were constrained by their presidents, who owned their schedules, vetted their speeches, sanctioned their travels, and never let them forget who was boss. In Lyndon Johnson's case, to be sure, it was not the president but rather his brother Robert who decreed the humiliations and eked out the punishments. But when LBJ succeeded Kennedy, he let no one but himself be equally mean to Humphrey, who was treated worse than all the others put together. As for Mondale, Carter's V.P., who venerated Humphrey and was briefed by him beforehand, there was no recorded presidential roughing-up, perhaps because the so-well-briefed vice president left no occasion for it. But there evidently was, for Mondale, the same cold politeness and ignored advice that Carter characteristically gave most of those around him. Mondale sometimes may have envied LBJ: Jack Kennedy (never mind Bobby) often paid attention when his V.P. spoke.

By comparison, Gore's experience appears to have been idyllic, energizing, creative—at least in its early years—and far from frustrating, except in the accumulation of advice not taken, arguments lost—which, over seven years, are bound to mount up—and also for the sheer embarrassment of close association with a grown man whose sex life more befitted early adolescence—and who lied about it even to his close associates, presumably including Gore. On the positive side, suffice it to say that their work relationship does Gore great credit, and Clinton still more. Powers and opportunities are so unequal in their offices that only a president can make the vice presidency a good experience, as Gore's has obviously been for the most part, at least up to Monica. Two cheers for Clinton.

But what of the lasting impact of the vice presidency on Gore's psyche? Humphrey and Mondale never got the chance to show what their experiences had done for them, except in the campaigns that they both lost. Nixon, and Johnson before him, may have suffered severely. Almost certainly their paranoia levels rose while they endured the second spot, and effects lingered. Why else did LBJ so humiliate Humphrey? And when Nixon was trying to resist mounting pressure to fire Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman, he famously invoked the treatment Eisenhower had meted out to his chief

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of staff, Sherman Adams, whom Eisenhower had forced to resign when it was discovered that he had accepted minor, but improper, gifts from a businessman. To Nixon, this seemed an ignoble sacrifice of a loyal aide, something he, Nixon, would never do. (Ultimately, of course, Nixon did offer up Haldeman.)

There is nothing in the record to suggest that such resentments have been driven deep into Gore by the frustrations of his veepship. Monica presents a possibility. In foreign affairs there are others. But Gore is too reserved to let any such things show. As a practical matter, the question seems unanswerable—at least for now.

MY FOURTH INTRIGUING question, and by far the most important, has to do with the relevance, or lack thereof, of Gore's vice presidential experience to what history has in store for American policymakers during the decade ahead. Continuing dilemmas, perhaps deepening but on familiar themes, are what I foresee after the millennium year. Along with these come aftereffects of present happenings, as they will then appear in retrospect, posing the perhaps insistent questions: "What did the vice president know, and when did he know it?" as well as, "What did he say, and when did he say it?" Kosovo and Chinese espionage now seem to be cases in point. Before Inauguration Day, 2001, there will be others.

The relevance of Gore's experience goes beyond policy problems into varieties of politics. He may lack Clinton's spontaneity and ease with people, as is often written, but he and Clinton are associates politically as well as governmentally, in the full sense of campaigning for public offices and laws alike. More than any of his predecessors, Gore was a central participant in the campaign of 1992, and again in 1996. With Congress, Gore appears to have been more observer and fixer, and occasionally strategist, than actual coprincipal, but that is a judgment from afar. Yet, in the crucial confrontation on the budget with Republican majorities, during the fall and winter of 1995–96, the time of government closings, Gore by all accounts was a coprincipal indeed. At least he was at every meeting—present in voice as well as body—that Stephanopoulos and his arch-rival, Dick Morris, choose to recall—a serious indication.

So Gore participated in one of the most significant departures of the modern presidency, "going public" to endeavor to bring pressure upon Congress, not by making speeches, not by holding fireside chats, not by dominating network news, not by delivering weekend radio addresses aimed at local outlets, and not by sending special messages to Congress itself—all tried-and-true techniques applied with great success as recently as Ronald Reagan's legislative fights of 1981—but rather by (or, more accurately, in addition to) using paid television ads in critical market areas across the country. I never saw those ads, being in England at the time, but Morris and Stephanopoulos alike credit them with creating the favorable public background against which then-Speaker Gingrich and his troops forced the government to close—and took the rap for it. What Reagan got for free, along with presidents before him as far back as FDR, Clinton had to pay for. And this is a harbinger of things to come for the next president, whoever he or she may be.

Gore's breadth of experience is virtually unprecedented. But his analytic strengths and weaknesses across the policy spectrum, foreign, defense, and domestic, have been shared with the press, and by the press with the public, only in a fragmentary way. His administrative strengths and weaknesses, his knowledge and imagination also have not been plumbed. Nor has his sense of history. Rather, more has been made, to date, of his stiffness in some public situations, his discomfort in spontaneous exchanges when he lacks the facts, his necessitous deference to Clinton, and his occasional verbal bloopers. Of these we shall hear and learn much more as the campaign season advances. I wish I were equally confident that journalists would press his colleagues on those other fronts and that the colleagues would respond to the fullest extent they conscientiously can. Otherwise, the man will run for office with this huge and relevant experience behind him, yet, outside of certain offices in Washington and overseas, no one will be the wiser about what it really means and what it may foreshadow if he gets the top job.

NOT HAVING SERVED in Washington for more than three decades, nor having worked with Gore since he first became a congressman, I'm of no help in those respects. But I did teach him when he was in college, longer ago than I care to recall, and I do remember well the human qualities that made him a good student—and a good person. He was curious, imaginative, and indefatigable when aroused, with a nose for news, respect for facts, a sharp sense of humor, and a great girlfriend he had the wit to marry.

Before he left the United States to be a soldier in Vietnam, he and Tipper came to say goodbye to me and my wife. He was in an Army private's uniform, belt and shoes shiny, pants creased, his usual wry humor much subdued, we thought, perhaps by boot camp—which must have been quite an experience for a St. Albans boy, fresh out of Harvard—but more probably by his imminent destination. When Gore reached Vietnam, the Army made him a correspondent for *Stars and Stripes*. So, although he had brushes with enemy fire, he was not steadily engaged in combat like some fellow infantrymen. No fools the Army, when posting senators' sons. But Al evidently did not know that when we saw him.

To Tipper and my wife and me—and him—Al was in a tough spot, headed for a brutal war of which we all had come to disapprove. Yet he was in that spot by choice. Unlike our son and many of Al's other classmates, similarly liable to be drafted, he had chosen not to wangle an officer-candidate's place in the Air Force or Navy. Rather, as he told me, he felt obligated to serve where most of his father's Tennessee constituents had to serve—in the ranks. That's what he was doing when he rose from our sofa to say goodbye and face Vietnam. He was very, very serious and stood up very straight. So did Tipper.

That's the picture in my head when I consider that this man has now become a candidate for president. Others will have other pictures. Mine is old but not, I think, irrelevant. Policies and politics take place in the context of character. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Close Encounters of the First Kind

TOUGH TIMES FOR Bernardo Bertolucci. When he began making films, in the early 1960s, he was one of the young surfers riding the Italian postwar tide, which had been generated by such older figures as Rossellini and De Sica. Bertolucci's *Before the Revolution*, his second film but his first to be seen here, had the paradoxical design that marked the work of Olmi and Pasolini, the sense of breaking free of convention at the same time that the film followed a careful plan. Bertolucci clearly owed much to older masters, but *Before the Revolution* sustained, movingly, the contradictory blend of angry despair and smoldering aspiration that was a signet of the time. To tag Bertolucci a Marxist in those days was almost superfluous. Even if his Marxism was only à la mode, not much more than noblesse oblige for young Italian artist-intellectuals of the day, it stamped him as someone who had matured just after World War II and the end of fascism.

Politics certainly didn't disappear from the Bertolucci work that soon followed, *The Spider's Stratagem* and *The Conformist* and others, but a preening aestheticism had slithered in, had immersed his films in a too-exquisite *Vogue* chic. Then, as the preciosity diminished a bit, we got the gaudily lauded *Last Tango in Paris*, which will be valuable as long as acting is valued because, whatever else may be arguable about it, it contains Brando's performance. A few more truly Italian pictures followed, not consistently gratifying, and then the steam seemed to wheeze out of Bertolucci. He found "renewal" where so many debilitated Westerners have found it, in exotica, in Asia and Africa—*The Last Emperor*, *Little Buddha*, *The Sheltering Sky*. But even those pictures were preferable to his return to Italy and a confection called *Stealing Beauty*, a film shorn of the connections with his country that had given even his lesser work an aortic pulse.

And now it's worse. **Besieged** (Fine Line), which is set mostly in Rome, smells of desperation, a near-frantic bankruptcy. We're told that Bertolucci's wife, Clare Peploe, had for years been keen about a short story by James Lasdun, that at last the chance came for her and her husband to adapt it for the screen and for him to direct it. It seems to me just possible that Lasdun's story had been stored away as emergency rations and that, when everything else had gone, they broke it out. It's a story of only flashy import, and it's not even very interesting as narrative.

In an unnamed African country, the police arrest a schoolteacher who dissents from the dictator. As he is taken away, his wife, Shandhurai, is very frightened: we know because urine trickles down her leg. She is next seen in Rome, where she is working as a maid for a composer-pianist named Kinsky while she studies to become a nurse. Kinsky falls in love with her and proposes marriage, but she is fiercely loyal to her husband (about whom Kinsky had not known). When the husband is liberated and arrives in Rome, however, she doesn't even meet him: she suddenly, precipitously, accepts Kinsky.

The emotional muzziness, the lack of character conviction would be weak enough even if the film were well constructed, but it isn't. It is stripped of connective tissue—for instance, there is no explanation of how Shandhurai got to Rome and became a nursing student, and there is no hint of love growing in her between her rejection of Kinsky and her acceptance of him. Inevitably, some Bertolucci loyalists are telling us that these matters show admirable astringency, an impatience with conventional data; but to me the film looks scrappy, as if he had not shot enough footage to edit it properly.

The picture's only asset is Thandie Newton, who was Sally Hemings in *Jefferson in Paris* and is again quietly lovely. The English actor David Thewlis, who once was Smike in the RSC's *Nicholas Nickleby* and who has been in three Mike Leigh films, plays Kinsky—without much help from the screenplay.

I have not been a consistently warm admirer of Bertolucci through the years, but at his worst, it was always possible to see vestiges of grand ambition in him. The vacuity and the skimpiness of *Besieged* are shocking.

Notting Hill (Universal) is in a sense a classic romantic comedy: it is built on a staunch old formula, the juxtaposition of two opposites. Here a world-famous screen star meets the proprietor of a small bookshop, and both are smitten. She is American, he is English—his shop is in the London district of the picture's title—so the quaint characteristics of both species are juxtaposed.

What's even more relevant, she is Julia Roberts and he is Hugh Grant. As was true long before Thomas A. Edison was born, entertainments of this kind depend primarily on the personae of their stars. The Roberts smile fills the screen; so—almost—does Grant's reticently aggressive charm. If the ambience is not as potent as, say, the Cary Grant-Irene Dunne paradise, it's insidious enough to make us feel at the finish that we would have liked more.

This in spite of the fact that the screenplay, by Richard Curtis, doesn't quite sparkle as it should. This is a let-down: because Curtis wrote the underprized romp *The Tall Guy*, and the fully prized romp *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. Some of the lines here crackle, but too often the chat simply seems space-filler, as if Curtis had said, "Gad! I can't think of anything really sharp here. I'll just leave it to Grant or Roberts to color the 'Yes' or 'Perhaps' or 'I'm so sorry.'"

Then there's that bothersome business of the ending. When a romance is built on a highly unlikely union, how is the screenplay going to make that union last? How, in this case, can a Hollywood figure and a scraggly bookseller, separated by a continent and an ocean, possibly have a future together? Comedy absolutely depends on our conviction that the future is reasonably bright for the people we care about; mechanical happy endings do not suffice. But that's precisely what we get here. At the end Curtis patches together a fragile solution, but who would want to bet on the permanence of this union? It is discomfiting to go through a picture like this one if it doesn't lead you to the Happily Ever Afterglow.

Roger Michell directed deftly enough, but he might have been more rigorous with Grant's Welsh flatmate, whose utterances sometimes have more jaw-chewing than clarity. The cinematographer was Michael Coulter, to whom we are all

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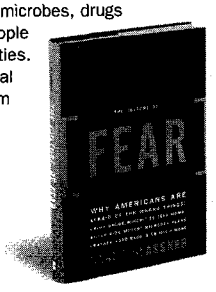

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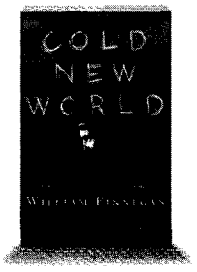

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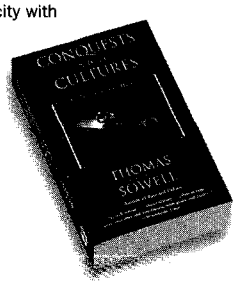

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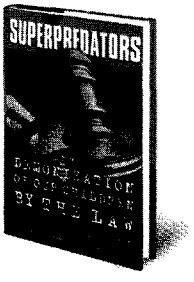

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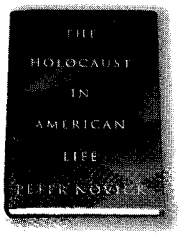

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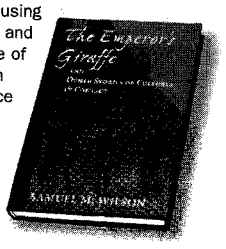

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grateful for *Sense and Sensibility* and who is visually chummy with London today.

Dept. of Lacuna Repair. I see that I stated the title incorrectly in my review of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* The correct title is *William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

In Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being,* a sophisticated young man sits on a park bench on the other end of which a young woman is reading a book. He asks her what she's reading, and she replies intently, "Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina.*" "Oh," he replies amiably, "THAT *Anna Karenina.*" ■

Martin Filler on Architecture

Lives of the Modern Architects

THE PUBLICATION IN England of Mark Girouard's *Big Jim: The Life and Work of James Stirling* marks a milestone in the evolution, or the devolution, of architectural biography. Though the form itself has existed for some 250 years, at least since the publication in 1750 of the *Parentalia*—a life-and-works of Sir Christopher Wren, compiled by his son and brought out by his grandson—architectural biography is neither as old nor as commonplace as the personal histories of artists. Whereas Vasari, Malvasia, and Bellori—the major sixteenth- and seventeenth-century chroniclers of Italian painters—saw a clear relation between the character of their subjects and the works that they created, their contemporaries apparently felt no such need to document the life stories of the great architects of their age.

But this interpretive connection between the lives and the works of artists has survived to this day, nowhere more so than in the half-completed four-volume biography of Picasso by John Richardson, the fullest exposition of the widely accepted axiom that the work cannot be properly understood except in the light (or the darkness) of the life. As Richardson himself has pointed out, however, there are dangers in oversimplifying such connections, in reading art as autobiography. The common notion that Picasso changed styles when he changed mistresses or wives is more correctly put in the reverse order. It was the artist's quest for fresh artistic directions that seemed to spill over into a need for novelty in his private life. Nor were Picasso's breaks with the old and his links with the new ever irrevocable; there were overlaps in the styles and in the women.

More important, the representational nature of most painting—even Picasso's, which was never wholly abstract, no matter how free or distorted it might seem—makes it possible to draw parallels even when the artist's intent is formal or allegorical. Thus a Picasso still life can reveal much about his erotic life, such as his depiction of the voluptuous but passive Marie-Thérèse Walter as a bowl of fruit, or the table-top composition of wineglasses and cherries that was in fact an encoded portrait of the young and spirited Françoise Gilot, painted shortly after the artist and his mistress met in a bistro in 1943.

But can one find similar connections and correspondences in the more abstract medium of architecture, which has become even more non-representational in the modern age, with its virtual banishment of figuration and ornamentation? Consider Taliesin. Frank Lloyd Wright's home in Spring Green, Wisconsin, which he began in 1911 and rebuilt and expanded several times over the ensuing decades, is correctly regarded as his most autobiographical structure. Set in a rural terrain that he had known since early childhood; and the focus of a new life he hoped to establish there with Mamah Borthwick Cheney after he abandoned his wife and six children in Oak Park, Illinois; and the scene of the mass murder of his soulmate, her children, and several others by a deranged servant; and the architect's safe haven during decades of professional rejection and critical neglect: Taliesin encapsulated more of Wright's personal experience than any of his works. Yet there is no way of knowing about any of these dramas simply by looking at the building. Indeed, to understand its meaning in Wright's life one must turn to biographical accounts in a way that is often unnecessary with the works of artists in other media.

The greatest portrait of Wright remains *An Autobiography,* first published in 1932, brought out in a revised version in 1943, and reissued with his further emendations in 1977, eighteen years after his death. The book is filled with fabrications, distortions, evasions, chronological lapses, and the wishful thinking that underlay Wright's indefatigable and often inexplicable optimism. Yet it is nonetheless an essentially truthful and deeply authentic account, a masterpiece not only of architectural interest but of American interest. It belongs with the memoirs of Benjamin Franklin, Ulysses Grant, and Henry Adams.

In "Taste and Autobiography," an apologia that Wright wrote about his unconventionally candid life story—it appeared in the year that *An Autobiography* was published—the architect asks an essential question:

> Then why write one?
>
> Well, I think only one who has been gratuitously twisted and maimed by publicity, or deliberately misrepresented to his fellows, and in consequence has had to hunchback his way through life, or one who has given his life, freely, to a great cause, or one who can make his life, such as it is, honestly interesting, useful or beautiful to his fellows, should be allowed to try.

No doubt Wright believed that he qualified in each of those categories, save perhaps being permanently disfigured by his many travails.

RARE IS THE season without several additions to the vast Wright bibliography, but there is still no fully satisfactory biography of him. The best treatment remains Robert C. Twombly's *Frank Lloyd Wright: His Life and His Architecture* (1979), flawed though it is by poor organization. Written for a more general audience, Brendan Gill's *Many Masks: A Life of Frank Lloyd Wright* (1987) is suffused with a petulant tone that betrays one supreme egotist's competition with a greater one. Meryle Secrest's *Frank Lloyd Wright* (1992) is certainly readable, but it displays this prolific popular biographer's insufficient grasp of the architecture that must be the foundation of any chronicle of Wright's life, no matter how absorbing other aspects of it might be.

In setting down his life story at a low

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ebb of his professional fortunes, as the Great Depression exacerbated the creative dry spell that had plagued him for a decade before 1932, Wright followed the example of his *lieber Meister* Louis Sullivan, not least in demonstrating how to use productively a protracted period of unemployment to enhance one's faltering professional reputation. Sullivan's *The Autobiography of an Idea* appeared in 1924, well after his career had dwindled from designing some of America's earliest and most compelling tall buildings in Chicago, Buffalo, and St. Louis to his late series of small banks in obscure Midwestern towns. As he wrote at the beginning of his book project in 1922:

> Such an autobiography might prove, or be made, an extremely effective medium, in which to carry the vague beginning, the gradual development and the eventual form of my philosophy of architecture. This thought aroused my emotional interest (hitherto lacking) and supplied a dominant idea upon which I could concentrate steadily and about which I could weave a most interesting story of a human trusting to his instincts (a rara avis).... It is precisely this human element that I should cause to permeate the work and radiate from it.

The day before he died, penniless and virtually forgotten except for a small band of devoted admirers, Sullivan said that he considered his two books—*A System of Architectural Ornament According With a Philosophy of Man's Powers* and *The Autobiography of an Idea*, both of which had arrived from the publisher only two days earlier—to have been his "greatest achievement."

Unfortunately, Sullivan was not to fare as well as Wright did at the hands of Robert Twombly, whose *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work* (1986) is a seriously misguided attempt at psychobiography, which reveals how dangerous it is to infer personal history from works of architecture. Twombly seems convinced that Sullivan was homosexual, which may or may not have been so. He provides no conclusive evidence to prove his claim, and much of what he does cite must be taken in the context of the Victorian era's very different means of expressing same-sex friendship. And little credence can be given to many other observations, such as "Sullivan preferred male to female anatomy as the object of study," or "His autobiography claimed greater affection for his mother than his father, but the truth may be just the opposite."

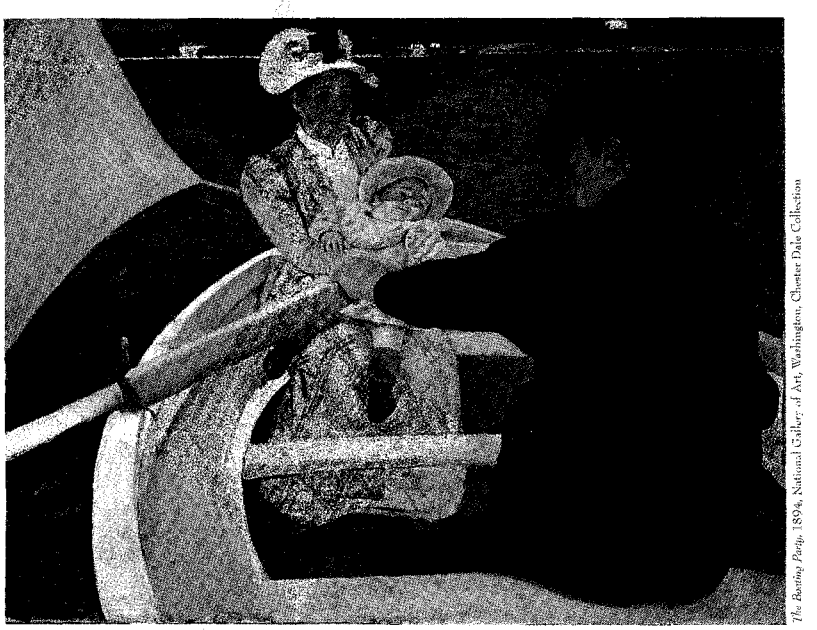
Twombly stumbles most badly—indeed, he undermines the soundness of his entire study—in his absurd assertion that Sullivan's "sexuality informed and is visible in his work." He sees Sullivan's florid architectural ornament as essentially feminine in nature, and thus somehow symptomatic of homosexuality. Writing of Sullivan's Gage Building of 1898 in Chicago, Twombly asserts that his

> columns can be read as part of geometric male form, but when they exploded into huge decorative symbols of femininity at the Gage, the image was almost ejaculatory: the male sexual organ emitting a female form. Had Sullivan meant the male to *support* or *give birth* to the female, he would have violated his own reading of universal truths wherein the female was vital and primary. Rather, the Gage imagery was of the male *becoming* female.

This is preposterous, especially as Sullivan provided extensive explication of his complex and highly symbolic embellishments in *A System of Architectural Ornament*. Would even definitive confirmation of his sexuality tell us anything more meaningful about his architecture?

A SECOND PAIRING OF architectural biographies by another writer further highlights the problems of axiomatically trying to link the personal and the professional. The art and

Her paintings had a new and different perspective. A woman's.



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architectural historian Franz Schulze's *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography*, which appeared in 1985, was an exemplary demonstration of how to balance the analysis of architecture with the private motives and the social circumstances that always play an important part in the realization of the most public of the arts. Schulze's conclusions were solid and judicious, if far from intellectually dazzling, and they added much more to the record than had been known before about the character of a man of extreme taciturnity and emotional reserve.

Schulze did not gloss over Mies's dreadful, if ineffectual, opportunism during the five years he remained in Nazi Germany after Hitler's rise to power. He also revealed in print for the first time the architect's relationship with Lora Marx, a Chicago divorcée, which lasted from 1940 until his death in 1969. He also disclosed the thwarted feelings that Dr. Edith Farnsworth, one of Mies's most important private clients of the postwar years, held for the architect; those affections were surely an added component of the commission that she gave him for her famous glass-walled house of 1946–51 in Plano, Illinois. And though Schulze also covered Mies's earlier and ultimately tragic relationship with his interior design collaborator Lilly Reich, he remained as coolly non-judgmental as any well-trained Freudian analyst.

In all, this creditable effort won the confidence of Mies's local associate architect on the Seagram Building, Philip Johnson, who asked Schulze to become his own biographer. This turned out to be a Faustian bargain. Schulze initially agreed to research and to write the book during Johnson's lifetime but to withhold publication, as his subject stipulated, until his death. After the text was completed, and as Johnson continued to live on and on (he will turn ninety-three in July), Schulze's anxiety about the shelf-life of his work began to mount. One question that he tended to ask interviewees for the biography, myself included, was whether Johnson's posthumous reputation is likely to be as formidable as his influence while alive. (My answer was an unequivocal no.) The fear that interest might plummet after Johnson's demise prompted the publisher to abandon its original schedule and to bring out *Philip Johnson: Life and Work* two years in advance of the huge swell of publicity that was expected for Johnson's ninetieth birthday in 1996.

The result of Schulze's project was a classic example of a competent biographer done in by his subject. Johnson's frankness about his homosexuality and its intimate details—and the equal openness of several of his partners, including his longtime companion David Whitney—might initially have given the author a false sense of assurance that his subject was being equally forthright about other areas of his history. Schulze is no fool, and he quickly realized that Johnson was being less than forthcoming in a number of his reminiscences; but still Schulze seems not to have seen through all his subject's ruses. Personal matters aside, Schulze is weak on Johnson's wide-ranging source material. In a two-and-a-half-page account of the Roofless Church of 1960 in New Harmony, Indiana, he does not cite Charles Jencks's well-known observation that the gate to the sanctuary is "probably intentionally reminiscent of Nazi architecture." Nor, in a long list of historical inspirations for the split pediment atop the AT&T building of 1978–84 in New York, does he mention the most likely inspiration of all: Robert Venturi's Vanna Venturi house of 1962–64 in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania.

One must feel sympathy for a biographer attempting to deal with such an evasive figure. But why was Schulze compelled to report pointless, salacious details about Johnson's sex life, and in a sensational tone so at odds with his dignified handling of Mies's sometimes equally messy love affairs? Was this because Schulze felt uncomfortable with Johnson's homosexuality? Was it because his publisher saw the rare possibility of an architectural best-seller with racy revelations about a media star? Or was it simply an ill-advised attempt to keep pace with the increasingly confessional and vulgar nature of biography and autobiography in this exhibitionist and celebrity-addled age?

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Frank Lloyd Wright's studio at Taliesin

The Eameses had a more benevolent biographical fate. A very different approach toward private affairs was taken by Pat Kirkham in *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century*, which appeared in 1995. It was long known that Charles Eames had been a womanizer. But did that fact have any bearing on the work of this husband-and-wife team and their professional relations, which until Kirkham's revisionist feminist study had been heavily weighted in Charles Eames's favor? Kirkham acknowledges that "Charles had more than one serious extra-marital relationship," though she mentions no names. But she does this delicate work responsibly. She goes on to add that "the extent, if any, to which this affected his working relationship with Ray is not clear, and there was some disagreement on this point among the people I interviewed." For those who want to know more, Kirkham discreetly appends a lengthy footnote, writing, in part:

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I touch upon this particular topic only to deal with the claims that, in some unspecified ways, Charles's sexual relationships with women other than Ray stand as proof of her marginality to the working partnership. I came across such assertions so frequently, in lectures and in formal discussions, that I felt obliged to address them. To have found Ray marginal to the partnership would not have offended my feminist or historical sensibilities—far from it. At the end of the day, however, those who wish to refute the evidence of Ray's creativity and input need to marshal evidence other than this. As far as I can gather, Charles tried not to let his affairs interfere with his personal relationship with Ray or their working relationship. I have been informed by a close friend of Ray's that in the late 1950s she contemplated divorce. Part of her decision to stay with Charles almost certainly was a desire to remain in a close working partnership—as was his decision to stay within the marriage and partnership.

This seems to me the ideal way of handling such personal information. It acknowledges the limits of the biographical art, and it respects that some things cannot be known to those outside the couple in question. Instead it focuses only on the effect that such behavior might have had on the subjects' work. Discretion should be violated only when the understanding of an artist's work demands that it be violated; and there is nothing salacious about the indiscretion that results.

SOMETIMES THE SHEER force of an architect's personality appears to dictate the subject as a likely candidate for biography, as was the case with *Architect: The Life and Work of Charles W. Moore* by David Littlejohn, published in 1984. Moore was hugely influential as an educator, and especially as dean of the architecture schools at Berkeley and Yale in the 1960s and '70s; but he built few public buildings of lasting importance, and since his death in 1993 seems a much less significant figure than do his close contemporaries Robert Venturi and Frank Gehry. By the standards of the early 1980s, certainly, Littlejohn did not egregiously discuss Moore's sex life—or more likely the complete lack of one, as those close to him have confirmed—but the book included more than enough indiscreet material to upset the subject and his closest professional collaborators.

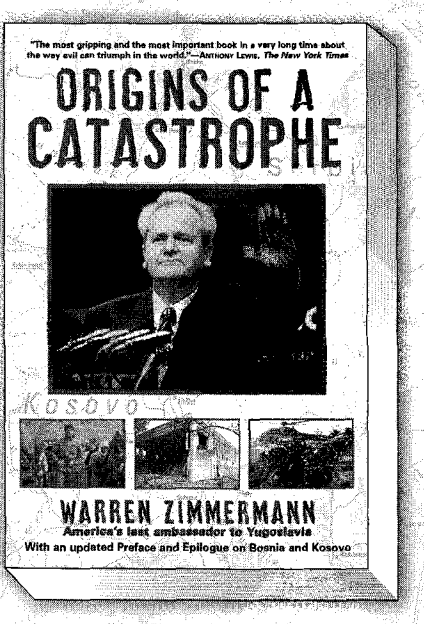
Moore and his circle were creatures of the 1960s in their belief in "total honesty," and they had a long history of what they called "badmouthing" one another. Littlejohn's biography is filled with many such unmediated negative opinions. Moore himself ought not to have been immune from criticism, to be sure; but it was one thing for his long-suffering assistants to castigate the peripatetic master, and quite another for the master to question the professional competence of his younger colleagues, several of whom who have gone on to run his architectural offices since his death. For all of Littlejohn's gossipy detail, he did not bring a penetrating portrait of the exceptionally gifted and tragically overextended Moore into focus, as a man or as an architect.

THE ARCHITECTS WHO set down their life stories are often those who feel that they have not received proper recognition and seek to validate their work for posterity. Consider Morris Lapidus, the creator of the unabashedly kitsch Fontainebleau Hotel of 1954 and Eden Roc Hotel of 1955 in Miami Beach. He "wanted to write a book which would overcome the criticism of my architecture by the architectural press and the critics who never accepted my theories of what architecture should be." During the purist heyday of the International Style, Lapidus was regarded by some of his peers as an irredeemable schlockmeister, but suddenly he won a certain (some would say excessive) acclaim in the late 1960s as a kind of architectural Douanier Rousseau, a pet primitive of iconoclasts who promoted his glitzy, stylistically inclusive schemes as a naïve version of the high-low mix they were playing with in their own more sophisticated designs.

Lapidus was praised by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, among others, for his free-wheeling populist juxtapositions of modernist form and historicist detail, but he was never truly embraced as an equal by the architectural elite, and his career prospects did not alter significantly in the decades after his "discovery" as a postmodernist *avant le lettre*. He is now ninety-six, and he has outlived most of his professional contemporaries. His autobiography, *Too Much Is Never Enough*, which appeared three years ago, is a warm and engaging self-portrait of a man far happier than many of his fellow architects, even the most celebrated and historically secure. The title (which echoes Jacqueline Susann's *Once Is Not Enough*) is owed to his belief that "architecture was a banquet of delight and joy. 'If you like ice cream, why stop with one scoop, have three scoops, too much is never enough. Enjoy! Enjoy!'" Of his chef d'oeuvre, the Fontainebleau, the architect writes disarmingly:

I finally realized that American taste was

"The most gripping and the most important book in a very long time about the way evil can triumph in the world."
—ANTHONY LEWIS, *The New York Times*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being influenced by the greatest mass media [sic] of entertainment of that time, the movies. Wasn't that exactly what I wanted to do when I studied architecture? So I designed a movie set! ... A famous director was a guest at the Fontainebleau's opening ceremonies. When I met this gentleman, he told me that someday he would very much like to film a picture at the Fontainebleau because it was a perfect movie set. So at last I had fulfilled my dream of being a set designer, only my sets were not for a play or a stage, they were the interiors of a grand hotel.

THE UNDISPUTED GIANTS of twentieth-century architecture have not been the subject of as much biographical study as one might think. Perhaps the most fortunate in his chronicler was the Finnish master Alvar Aalto, whose three-volume biography by his longtime friend and late-life client Göran Schildt, published between 1984 and 1989, is the paragon of a definitive life-and-works of a modern architect. Schildt's book is neither hagiographic nor debunking. As opposed to biographers intent on preserving an idealized image of their subjects, Schildt has such confidence in Aalto's greatness that he has no difficulty in presenting the artist's shortcomings in a direct but sympathetic manner. He handles Aalto's professional relations with his two architect-wives with a discretion perhaps dictated by the author's friendship with the architect's widow; but there are many hints throughout the trilogy of Aalto's earthy appetites, alcoholic excesses, and vivid personality. Most importantly, Schildt is superlative in analyzing Aalto's work. Too many architectural biographers are not trained architectural historians, and their understanding of the building art often lags behind their understanding of human nature.

Oddly, there has not yet been a full-scale biography of Le Corbusier, though H. Allen Brooks has written a minutely detailed history of his early years and there are excellent, concise life-and-works by William J. R. Curtis and Stanislaus von Moos. Some books contain tantalizing personal details. Charles Jencks's *Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture* of 1973 offers intriguing glimpses of a man fascinated by Josephine Baker, country fairs, practical jokes, and a wife—a former model—of far less intellectual ambition and attainment than himself. Are these just extraneous details, or might they shed further light on Corbusier's increasing interest, from the 1930s onward, in the primitive and the vernacular, reflected in his move away from the purist International Style to the Brutalism of his later career?

Just as oddly, there is still no life of Louis Kahn, whose significance to architecture during the third quarter of the twentieth century approached Corbusier's during the second. That omission might have had much to do with the wishes of Kahn's widow, who died two years ago and was understandably loath to publicize details of her husband's erotic life apart from her—including his fathering two children with other women. Less reticent about her life with Kahn is Anne Griswold Tyng, an architect who was his much younger professional collaborator and the mother of the first of his two children born out of wedlock. In *Louis Kahn to Anne Tyng: The Rome Letters, 1953-54*, which she waited to publish until 1997, after Esther Kahn's death, she not only seeks to validate her influence on Kahn's architectural thought and design, she also portrays him as an appallingly self-absorbed and improvident lover, to say nothing of a deadbeat dad.

Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer's *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works*, which was published in 1888, two years after Richardson's death, is often cited as the first biography of an American architect, despite the many earlier works on the great American architect Thomas Jefferson. In fact, van Rensselaer's book is much stronger on the works than the life. (For a better idea of the man whose personality was so uncannily akin to the uncommonly animated, boldly expansive, and physically imposing buildings he created, one must turn to such recent studies as James F. O'Gorman's *Living Architecture: A Biography of H.H. Richardson* and Margaret Henderson's *Henry Hobson Richardson*, both of 1997.) Yet van Rensselaer was working within the accepted limits of Victorian biography, in which a life—no matter how well-examined—was meant to be an accounting of public actions, illuminated (if need be) by personal anecdotes to give added dimensions to the protagonist's work. But to put it mildly, such Victorianism is now a thing of the past. Which brings us back to Mark Girouard's *Big Jim*.

Girouard began his life of James Stirling as an authorized biography commissioned by the architect's widow soon after his death in 1992. The book's unfortunate title, as much a reference to the architect's excessive corpulence as to his professional eminence, is the first sign of trouble. Then, in his introduction, Girouard writes of architects that

El Tigre

"He who rides the tiger dare not step down."
—Chinese proverb

Down the market street a man
is leading a ringed tiger

loping on the cobblestones
while coolly its enormous

fanged head snatches
cans of tomatoes, light bulbs,

newsprint, girls draped in tiger
suits, the heads of kings,

assassins. The man pulls
on the leash

and the tiger turns,
amazed and happy that so much

falls in the compass
of its jaws.

The day is a yellow light
walking through its body;

the air is the bluest river
its dreams imagine;

its tail drags in the dust
like a cordillera,

where it walks it is
the eyebrow of the world,

and the man grows smaller
and smaller until he is no more

than a breath
under the roof of the tiger's

palate, amazed to be among
the saw toothed range

of ivory hills, the dark yawn
of night; how precious now

those market stalls, the hoarse
cries of the hawkers!

Ron De Maris

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> Unless their buildings are unusually high or unusually large, or fall down, or are blown up, or are attacked by the Prince of Wales, they seldom receive much attention. Their personal lives, unlike those of royalty or pop stars, tycoons or footballers, jockeys or even novelists, are ignored by the media.

Girouard is eager to rectify that deplorable lapse, and to give architects an equal chance in the celebrity sweepstakes. And so he discloses Stirling's extramarital affair, carried on for the last six years of his life, with one of his female students. Stirling's widow understandably withdrew her support from the project when she learned of that impending exposure.

GIROUARD'S REVELATIONS are no more shocking than the liaisons disclosed by Pat Markham, Franz Schulze, and Anne Tyng; but they had the decency to wait until their subjects and their spouses or lovers were dead (or, in the case of Schulze on Johnson, wrote with his subject's knowledge). In 1932, Wright cautioned against undue circumspectness in autobiographical writing, lest the "enterprise is ruined by the 'taste' that runs as the product of pride and current social standards, unless his life has been lived in 'taste.' Mine has not." Nor have most people's. An individual has the right and the authority to make such revelations about himself. But a third party coming along and peddling the humiliating secrets? Surely that is, morally speaking, another matter entirely.

Girouard is knowledgeable and accurate about Stirling's architecture, even though his enthusiasm sometimes gets the best of him, as in his erroneous assertion that "for over twenty years he was the architect best known in the world to other architects or to people interested in contemporary architecture," a claim that would surprise Johnson, I.M. Pei, and perhaps even Michael Graves. Girouard is nonetheless superb in evoking the milieu of prewar Liverpool, where Stirling grew up, and of postwar London, where the young architect moved in 1950. As he writes:

> One of the people in the set was Anne Sharpley, a popular girl from Manchester and a successful journalist on the *Evening Standard*. [The jazz musician George] Melly describes her as "warm, funny, beautiful, I thought. And rather promiscuous, why not?"... She liked Mick Mulligan because she found him "deliciously grubby." She may have liked it less when he pissed into her shoe, because he was too lazy or drunk to go to the lavatory. ("It was a toeless shoe, so it was a totally ridiculous activity," according to Melly.)

Far from seeming like so much padding, these colorful digressions provide an important context for Stirling's outsized personality and behavioral quirks. The abundance of more substantive primary source information that Girouard gleaned from his scores of interviews will be indispensable to future scholars. Yet what his informants repeat over and over again is that the architect never fully revealed himself to anyone. According to Michael Wilford, Stirling's partner for his last three decades, "He wouldn't level with you somehow. There was always the sense that he was withholding something. Maybe it wasn't conscious, maybe it was part of his personality, but it was frustrating."

Owing to Stirling's elusiveness, one wonders whether the unusual attention that Girouard turns on his love life, early and late, stems from his having less to dwell on in the architect's otherwise opaque inner life. But this is an excuse. Was it absolutely necessary to have Stirling's last mistress reassure us that "We had a very erotic relationship"? Does her protestation that "I wasn't only the pretty face" need to be supported by her

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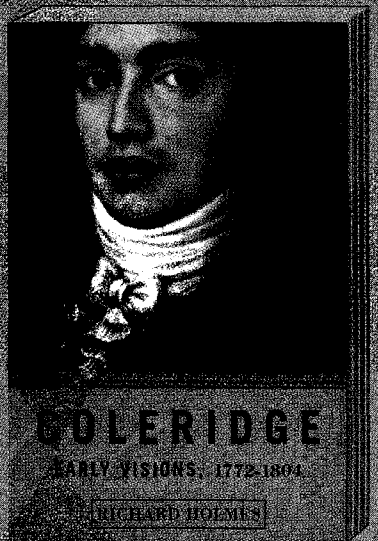

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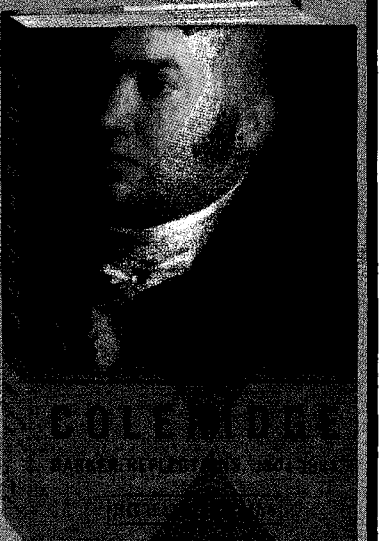

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assertion that Stirling "was interested in my architecture and my sensibility about architecture"? Girouard even records the embarrassing come-on line that a bibulous Stirling once murmured to the author's startled wife over dinner. This is not exactly a contribution to knowledge. It only reinforces the popular canard that in order to make architecture more interesting to the general public, it must be made more entertaining, preferably through the cult of personality.

As the boundaries between public and private continue to dissolve all around us, the publication of *Big Jim*—a work by an otherwise respected architectural historian that would have been unthinkable a generation ago—gives pause as to how we assess the lives of modern architects. If ripping apart celebrities is indeed the Dionysiac rite of our age, will it end in even more destructive tendencies when it is unleashed on the most socially constructive of the arts? ■

How Henry Kissinger won the Cold War, or so he thinks.

The Revisionist

By ROBERT KAGAN

Years of Renewal by Henry Kissinger

(Simon and Schuster, 1,151 pp., $35)

I.

OF THE HANDFUL of American diplomats who achieved any real fame, Henry Kissinger may be unique in having earned renown for presiding over a period in American foreign policy widely regarded as disastrous. Especially miserable were the latter years of Kissinger's government career, from 1974 through 1976, which is the period that he covers in *Years of Renewal*, his third and concluding volume of memoirs. Before 1973, there had been some modest successes, and the promise, at least, of dramatic breakthroughs: the peace agreement that ended the Vietnam War, the opening to China, the expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt, and two successful American-Soviet summits that opened the possibility, or so Kissinger and Richard Nixon believed, of an improved relationship with a more restrained Soviet Union.

After 1973, however, the pillars that held up Nixon's and Kissinger's "new structure of peace" collapsed. Scandal at home helped to precipitate failure abroad; the Soviet Union entered a new phase of adventure and aggressiveness; and American foreign policy began a downward spiral, reaching bottom by the mid-1970s. Here is how Kissinger described this period in his second volume of memoirs, *Years of Upheaval*, which appeared in 1982:

> Congressional assaults on a weakened President robbed him of both the means of containment and the incentives for Soviet moderation.... [P]rogressive restrictions on executive authority from 1973 to 1976 ... doomed Indochina to destruction ... [and] blocked military assistance to key allies. In time the Soviets could not resist the opportunity presented by a weakened President and a divided America abdicating from foreign responsibilities. By 1975 Soviet adventurism had returned, reinforced by an unprecedented panoply of modern arms.

In *Years of Upheaval*, the most that Kissinger was prepared to say about the years after 1973 was that he and Ford had held the fort. The country and its Constitution survived. Beyond noting this *de minimis* accomplishment, however, Kissinger advanced only modest claims on behalf of his policies in the Ford years. He took some intellectual satisfaction from the fact that "the basic categories of our public discourse on international affairs—China, the Mideast, SALT and the strategic balance, energy policy, new initiatives with allies—[were] still those established during the years of upheaval *now coming to an end*." (The italics are mine.) But Kissinger believed, and everyone believed, that America's "years of upheaval" had ended, and its "years of renewal" had begun, not during the presidency of Gerald Ford, but with the election of Ronald Reagan.

Indeed, Kissinger described the rout of American interests after 1973 in a later work, *Diplomacy*:

> The collapse of Indochina in 1975 [was] followed in America by a retreat from Angola and a deepening of domestic divisions, and by an extraordinary surge in expansionism on the part of the Soviet Union. Cuban military forces had spread from Angola to Ethiopia in tandem with thousands of Soviet combat advisers. In Cambodia, Vietnamese troops backed and supplied by the Soviet Union were subjugating that tormented country. Afghanistan was occupied by over 100,000 Soviet troops. The government of the pro-Western Shah of Iran collapsed and was replaced by a radically anti-American fundamentalist regime which seized fifty-two Americans, almost all of whom were officials, as hostages. Whatever the causes, the dominos indeed appeared to be falling.

The mid- to late 1970s, he acknowledged, were the "seeming nadir of America's international position."

KISSINGER'S OWN POSITION as America's premier statesman also took a tumble after 1973. During Nixon's first term, Kissinger bestrode the world like a geopolitical colossus. As national security adviser, he leapt from one spectacular diplomatic feat to another, and he enjoyed a national and international celebrity hitherto unknown to American policy-makers. His fame was such that Oriana Fallacci could ask, in a famous interview, "How do you explain the incredible movie-star status you enjoy? How do you explain the fact that you are almost more famous and popular than the president?" To which Kissinger, giddy with success, apparently replied (he later denied using these words) that Americans admired him for achieving great things single-handedly: "Americans

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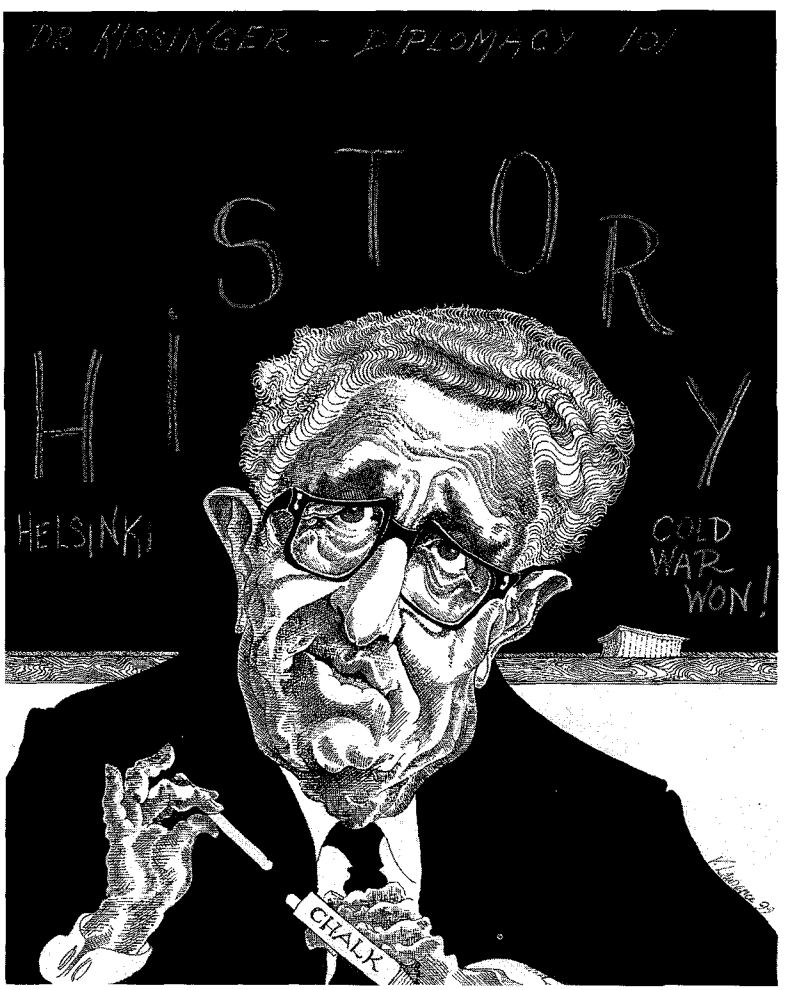
like the cowboy who leads the wagon train by riding ahead alone on his horse, the cowboy who rides all alone into the town with his horse and nothing else."

After Nixon's resignation, however, Kissinger's influence inside the government, and his reputation outside it, declined precipitously. Without Nixon to back him—by 1973, even Nixon had grown jealous and resentful of Kissinger's fame—Kissinger's career as a virtuoso on the world stage ended. On the most important matters of arms control and détente with the Soviet Union, he faced sniping from within the Ford cabinet, and by the end he had to travel to Moscow in humiliation, without even the authority to close deals. Outside the administration, Kissinger became the prime target for conservatives and neo-conservatives (and a smattering of liberals) seeking an end to détente and a tougher line against the Soviets. Reagan practically made Kissinger a campaign issue in his challenge to Ford in 1976, and Ford was forced to clip Kissinger's wings, "demoting" him from national security adviser to Secretary of State and publicly promising never to use the word "détente" again.

For these reasons, perhaps, Kissinger for many years apparently felt no compelling need to produce a third volume of memoirs on those last, hapless years in office. His first two volumes came forth in an explosion of fevered industriousness. Kissinger left office in January 1977 and immediately began work on *White House Years*, which came out two years later. Then he turned quickly to the second volume, *Years of Upheaval*, which was published in 1982. But Kissinger did not produce his next book until 1994, and it was *Diplomacy*—a historical treatise on the conduct of American foreign policy. When *Diplomacy* appeared, it was reasonable to assume that Kissinger might never produce a third volume of memoirs.

By the 1990s, indeed, the world was not exactly waiting with breathless anticipation for Kissinger's account of the Ford administration, which, to say the least, lacked the excitement of the Nixon years. The conflict in Cyprus, the Sinai disengagement agreements, the ethnic turmoil in Lebanon, the summit between Ford and Mao in 1975, the Panama Canal treaty negotiations, the crisis in Angola, and the interim arms control agreement signed at Vladivostok in 1974: whatever significance one might attach to these events—and Kissinger in this volume has interesting things to say about all of them—they were not the stuff of high diplomatic drama. Who would have blamed Kissinger for quitting after the first two volumes, which were masterpieces in their genre?



Henry Kissinger by Vint Lawrence for The New Republic

In the foreword to his new book, Kissinger claims that he waited more than a decade to write about the Ford years in order "to permit the evaluation of the entire period of my government service from a philosophical perspective rather than according to the tactics of the moment." Whatever this may mean, the very title of Kissinger's third volume of memoirs shows that his aim in this massive tome is not merely to complete the dreary record of his last years in office. His goal is a good deal more ambitious: it is to salvage the glittering reputation that was tarnished by the Ford years, and to do so by providing a grand revisionist account of those last years in office.

Some of this revisionism is merely a matter of tone. Did Kissinger emphasize rather darkly in *Years of Upheaval* that it was during the Ford years that Indochina was "doomed to destruction" by a feckless Congress and the breakdown of presidential authority? In *Years of Renewal* he paints those events in brighter colors, claiming as one of the achievements of the Ford administration the way it "managed the collapse of Indochina with dignity and restraint." Other revisions are more substantive. Had Kissinger lamented, seventeen years ago, that the "interim" arms agreement struck at Vladivostok was drained of whatever importance it might have had by the fierce opposition it aroused in the United States? In the present volume Kissinger calls that agreement "a major breakthrough on strategic arms control."

Yet these are relatively minor emendations compared with Kissinger's broader assertion in *Years of Renewal*. For Kissinger now claims that, far from merely holding the fort in the mid-1970s against a storm of adverse domestic and global forces, he and Ford actually laid the foundations for America's eventual victory in the Cold War. They did so, moreover, consciously and deliberately, with a foresight and a confidence that has somehow been overlooked by most observers. This is a grand and startling claim.

II.

As KISSINGER NOW tells the story, the Ford administration achieved this triumph by challenging Moscow on the battleground of ideology, by bringing "human rights" and the issue of Soviet treatment of citizens in the Eastern bloc to the fore in U.S.-Soviet relations. A decisive moment, Kissinger now claims, came at the meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki in 1975, when the United States and its allies forced a reluctant Moscow leadership to accept two

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principles of behavior that would later prove its undoing. One was the principle of "peaceful change of borders," which in some respects established the legal basis on which Germany was eventually reunified in 1991.

Of equal if not greater importance, Kissinger contends, was the enshrinement of human rights principles in the so-called "Basket III" of issues in the Helsinki Final Act. According to Kissinger's account, these "provisions for the free movement of peoples and ideas and for the protection of 'human rights and fundamental freedoms,' which the democracies insisted on including in the Final Act," were poison pills in the Helsinki agreement that eventually undid Communism and the Soviet Union. In the years to come, "visionary and courageous activists like Václav Havel and Lech Walesa turned these clauses of the Final Act into rallying cries for resisting totalitarianism in the Communist world and thereby ultimately brought about the liberation of Eastern Europe." Human rights advocates throughout the Soviet bloc, Kissinger argues, "interpreted the Helsinki Final Act as enshrining human rights in international law—a view we fully supported."

Kissinger asserts not only that he supported this elevation of human rights as a matter of moral principle. He also claims to have suspected, even in 1975, that these human rights provisions in the Helsinki Final Act would bring the Soviet Union down. According to Kissinger, "the Western democracies pushed Basket III and peaceful change to exploit what we had come to recognize as the latent vulnerabilities of the Soviet empire." Many of his critics in the United States attacked the Helsinki Final Act as a sell-out and a "Super Yalta," because it appeared to accept and to legitimize Soviet control of Eastern Europe in a legally binding international agreement; but Kissinger argues that the critics were proved wrong, shamefully wrong. "Rarely has a diplomatic process so illuminated the limitations of human foresight." With the passage of time, the Helsinki Final Act "came to be appreciated as a political and moral landmark that contributed to the progressive decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet system over the next decade and a half."

IN THESE MEMOIRS, Kissinger depicts himself as something of a lonely prophet of the end of the Cold War. As he tells it, all too few had perceived the opportunity at hand in the mid-1970s, but Kissinger and Ford persisted, confident in their purposes and optimistic about the ultimate triumph of the West over an enemy whose imminent crack-up was visible to those with vision, with special insight. To be sure, Kissinger abjures any pretense of clairvoyance: "statesmen act on the basis of tendencies, not certainties." Nor does he pretend that he expected the Soviet Union "to collapse so quickly." Still, the tendencies—toward the decline and the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union—were, he claims, both visible and exploitable. True, "intelligence reports conveyed fearsome images of a vast military capacity in the service of an implacable resolve," Kissinger writes. "But anyone who had ever been on an official visit to the Soviet Union ... could not but gain the impression that the whole elaborately constructed stage set was precarious and might collapse at any moment." All that was needed, apparently, was the right ideological thrust aimed at the chink in the totalitarian Soviet armor.

Without expecting the immediate collapse of the Soviet Empire, Kissinger claims, "we were content to loosen its bonds wherever possible and to push the right of peaceful change while awaiting the conditions that would enable the democracies to pursue it." In the end, and no thanks to its many liberal and neo-conservative detractors, "the Ford Administration achieved what turned out to be a strategic victory" at Helsinki. Others helped to achieve this victory, of course, especially in the 1980s. Kissinger does not wish to "tak[e] credit away from great men like Havel [and] Walesa." But he does wish to reapportion the credit that has hitherto been distributed among American leaders. "Other presidents were to receive the credit for winning the Cold War," Kissinger notes with a trace of resentment at this historical injustice. But he is "certain the time will come when it is recognized that the Cold War could not have been won" without Gerald Ford.

NOR, PRESUMABLY, without Henry Kissinger. Amid his many encomia to Gerald Ford as the savior of his country, Kissinger cannot help but point out that in matters of foreign policy Ford was an ill-informed novice without strategic understanding, a decent and modest man whom Nixon had made vice president precisely because "he had so little background in international affairs." (In fact, Kissinger notes, Nixon had hoped the selection of Ford would dissuade Congress, for this very reason, from proceeding toward impeachment.) Of course, Kissinger himself is too modest to claim openly that credit for engineering America's triumph in the Cold War really belongs to him. But the astute reader will perhaps understand that if the Ford administration cleverly sowed the seeds of the Soviet Union's later demise, then the mastermind behind that strategy was probably someone other than Gerald Ford.

For all his praise of Ford, in fact, Kissinger's goal in these memoirs is not primarily to resurrect Ford's reputation but to repair his own, and Nixon's. He does so by means of an extraordinary assertion. Kissinger's account of the 1970s is designed to establish an essential continuity between the policies of détente and the policies of Ronald Reagan. "If Harry Truman was the architect of the core institutions that won the Cold War and Ronald Reagan provided the impetus for the end game, Richard Nixon was the pivotal figure in the middle period." And pivotal not just in the sense of keeping America intact as a global power in the disastrous final years of Vietnam. It was during Nixon's presidency, Kissinger claims, "that the main lines of American policy for the final two decades of the Cold War were put in place."

KISSINGER'S REVISIONIST interpretation aims at refuting the common view that Reagan's policies were a sharp departure from the détente practiced by Nixon, Ford, and Carter. "Ronald Reagan and his associates deserve much credit for the denouement of the Cold War," Kissinger acknowledges, but not because they took a different course. "Reagan's policy," he claims, "was, in fact, a canny reassertion of the geopolitical strategies of the Nixon and Ford Administrations clothed in the rhetoric of Wilsonianism." The "victories of the 1980s derived from a Reaganite variant—not a rejection—of the strategies of the 1970s."

This is a significant assertion, with important implications, as Kissinger intends, not only for our understanding of the Cold War but also for the conduct of American foreign policy more generally. It is one thing if Reagan won the Cold War by returning to the confrontational and ideologically charged policies of the Truman era, as most observers at the time believed and as later historians have reaffirmed. It is quite another thing if Reagan's policies were little more than a "variant" on Nixonian détente and Kissingerian realism, merely dressed up in ideological rhetoric. After all, there is a rather important debate raging over the proper place of morality and ideology in American foreign policy today, on issues ranging from the intervention in Kosovo to the conduct of relations with China. Whether or not Kissinger's revisionism takes over as the common interpretation of the last two decades of the Cold War should have no small impact on that debate.

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IT SHOULD HAVE no small impact, that is, if anyone is paying attention. Judging from the reviews of *Years of Renewal*, however, one gets the impression that no one is paying attention. Not a single reviewer has even made reference to Kissinger's revisionist claims, much less tried to evaluate their merit. Perhaps this neglect is due to the fact that *Years of Renewal* is a very fat book, and there is only so much one can cover in a review. But there may also be a more disturbing explanation: that we remain in the midst of a historical process of smoothing over what were once titanic Cold War disputes, treating them as if they were mere differences of nuance among policy disputants who, for all their minor disagreements, nevertheless shared the same broad goals and the same general view of how those goals could be attained.

We commonly hear these days that the Cold War was a time of relatively simple strategic verities and, compared with our present era of uncertainty, confusion, and rancor, a period of bipartisanship and common agreement on the need to contain and to defeat the Soviet menace. Occasionally, someone such as William Bundy comes along to remind us rudely of the vicious personal, partisan, and ideological struggles that actually dominated the Cold War years. And Kissinger himself in these memoirs re-fights some of those old battles with a fresh bitterness that belies his assertion of seamless continuity (about which more later). But the tendency since 1989 has been toward forgiving and, more importantly, forgetting. The decade since the end of the Cold War has been an era of good feelings, a time of historiographical healing.

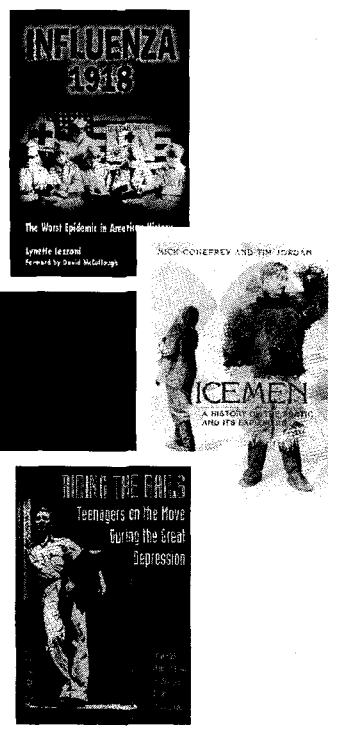
Kissinger is no doubt counting on this self-willed collective amnesia to bring about a general acceptance of the bold revisionist argument of his book. Before we slip permanently into our post-Cold-War coma, however, it may be worth returning to the record just for a moment to examine whether Kissinger's claim to a share of the Cold War victory has any merit.

III.

THE RECORD IS not exactly thin. Kissinger is one of only a handful of American foreign policymakers in history whose very name has stood for a certain clear and well-defined theory of international relations, and for a distinct view of the way the United States should conduct itself in its dealings with the rest of the world. In the past century, one thinks of John Hay and the "Open Door," George Kennan and "containment," John Foster Dulles and "rollback." But even those precedents do not match the breadth and the depth of vision with which Kissinger's name is linked. There was more to Kissinger than détente. Both in office and in his voluminous writings, Kissinger elaborated broad theories of international politics, attempted to explain the way the world works, discussed in a general sense what was possible in foreign affairs and what was not, and attempted to fit the conduct of American foreign policy, and in particular the way it had to be managed during the turbulent 1970s, within these overarching constructs.

Détente was not just a tactic. If one takes Kissinger seriously as a strategic thinker, détente was the product of a consistent and well-constructed worldview applied to the trying circumstances of a specific era but theoretically applicable to all eras, including our own. And the principles upon which Kissinger based the policy of détente could not have been clearer. In order to evaluate his new claim that there was essential continuity between his policies and the "variant" pursued by Ronald Reagan, it is necessary to go back and examine those principles, and the manner in which Kissinger put them into practice in the 1970s.

Readers of *Years of Renewal* may want



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to recall that first among these principles, and shaping all the others, was the reality and the necessity of coexistence with the Soviet Union and with Soviet Communism; and not as a temporary condition of international relations, but as a permanent one. The expectation of a Soviet collapse that Kissinger now retrospectively attributes to himself was nowhere apparent in his actions or in his statements as a policy-maker. Quite the contrary. The conflict with the Soviet Union, he admonished Americans throughout the 1970s, would simply "not admit of resolution by victory in the classical sense. We are compelled to coexist." To believe otherwise, Kissinger argued, to ignore what he called in 1974 the "imperative of coexistence," was to engage in self-delusion and, indeed, a dangerous self-delusion.

The misguided hope of American leaders in the early Cold War years, leaders such as Truman and Dean Acheson, was that "containment would transform the Soviet Union and that a changed Soviet society would then evolve inexorably into a compatible member of a harmonious international community." But this had proved a false dream. As late as 1976, Kissinger was urging Americans to confront the fact that, in the thirty years since the beginning of the Cold War, the Soviet Union had "recovered from the devastation of World War II and pressed vigorously ahead on the path of industrial growth." With the "acquisition of nuclear technology and the transformation of the international system through decolonization," the Soviet Union had emerged as a "first-class military power." Soviet "industrial, technological, and military power" had grown impressively, and by the 1970s it had developed "its economic strength and technology to a point where it can match the West in many sectors of industrial and military power."

KISSINGER NOW CLAIMS that he believed that the Soviet Union was teetering on the edge of collapse in the mid-1970s. But in 1976, even after what he now alleges was the "strategic victory" at Helsinki, he was arguing the opposite. It was precisely the enduring reality of Soviet power, he insisted, that made coexistence rather than confrontation the necessary goal of American foreign policy. Indeed, given the fact of Soviet power, and especially the mammoth nuclear arsenal that it had amassed since the 1960s, it was folly to pursue any goal other than coexistence. Any other goal risked catastrophe. Soviet power, Kissinger declared in a speech in 1973, had made it a "necessity" to shift "from confrontation to negotiation."

The second principle of détente was more hopeful. Since each superpower had the capacity to destroy the other, Kissinger argued in the 1970s, this paradoxically gave them a shared interest in self-preservation, and it was upon this fundamental common interest that a structure of peaceful coexistence, and even cooperation, could be erected. Given the apocalyptic dangers of confrontation, each side had to act with restraint, each had to be conscious of the needs and the interests of its adversary, and each had to avoid taking opportunistic advantage of the other side's vulnerabilities lest even relatively minor crises escalate rapidly to nuclear confrontation.

Much to the dismay of liberal critics, then and now, Kissinger's détente did not aim at ending the Cold War competition. Hopes for such an outcome were utopian (and for that very reason, Kissinger believed, typically American). Kissinger himself entertained no such fancies. His efforts to forge closer ties with China were designed to unnerve the Soviets and to make them more pliable. His Middle East policies aimed at reducing Soviet influence in that vital region. As he tried to explain to liberal critics at the time, "the very concept of 'détente'" was "applicable only to an adversary relationship." For Kissinger, the purpose of détente was not to end competition but to manage it, and to keep it from flaring into global conflagration. Even as the competition continued, Kissinger hoped that he could propound and codify some rules of the road, some "principles of responsible relations in the nuclear age." These rules would include "respect for the interests of all, restraint in the uses of power, and abstention from efforts to exploit instability or local conflicts for unilateral advantage."

KISSINGER EXPECTED NEITHER an end to competition nor an escape from coexistence. The outer limit of Kissinger's optimism in the 1970s was that "with patience, a pattern of restraints and a network of vested interests" could develop which might "give coexistence a more hopeful dimension and make both sides conscious of what they would stand to lose by reverting to the politics of pressure, confrontation, and crisis." Ultimately, in the best of circumstances, détente might advance beyond establishing a stable equilibrium between the two superpowers and promote "the habits of mutual restraint, coexistence, and, ultimately, cooperation."

Such confidence as Kissinger expressed in the 1970s, therefore, was not a confidence in the West's ultimate triumph—certainly not within a foreseeable future that could have any relevance for current policies—but in its ability to establish and to maintain a global equilibrium. "We cannot prevent the growth of Soviet power," he argued in a speech in 1976, but "the industrial democracies possess vast strengths," and if used with confidence and consistency those strengths could be used "to contain Soviet power and to channel that power in constructive directions." Still, far from envisioning an eventual Soviet collapse, Kissinger argued that these important, if limited, goals could be accomplished only if the American people did *not* "mesmerize themselves with the illusion of simple solutions"—solutions such as the transformation of Soviet society or the possibility of victory in the Cold War.

THESE PREMISES OF détente had clear implications for the way the United States had to deal with the Soviet Union in the contest of ideologies. In Kissinger's view, the American goal could not be the transformation of Soviet society—indeed, the United States could not even apply pressure for change—because the Communist leaders in Moscow would then have no incentive to cooperate in the peaceful structures of détente. "To combine détente with increasing pressure on the Soviet Union," he warned Congress in 1974, "would be disastrous. We would not accept it from Moscow; Moscow will not accept it from us."

Americans had to understand "what can and cannot be achieved in changing human conditions in the East." The United States could not demand "that the Soviet Union, in effect, suddenly reverse five decades of Soviet, and centuries of Russian, history. Such an attempt would be futile and at the same time hazard all that has already been achieved." If the United States tried to "transform the Soviet system by pressure," Kissinger argued in 1974, then "we would be reviving the doctrines of liberation and massive retaliation of the 1950s. And we would do so at a time when Soviet physical power and influence in the world are greater than a quarter-century ago when those policies were devised and failed. The futility of such a course is as certain as its danger."

Here again, Kissinger in the 1970s portrayed the Soviet Union not as a weak power susceptible to change, but as a strong power whose internal structures could not be forced to change without risking Armageddon. In response to critics who claimed that this policy lacked a moral core, Kissinger invoked the specter of nuclear war, and pointed out that "the preservation of human life and human society are moral values, too." The "moral" imperatives of peace and stability required the United States to abstain from ideological confrontation. How hard

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could the United States press, Kissinger asked in 1973, "without provoking the Soviet leadership into returning to practices in its foreign policy that increase international tensions?" Was the American public "ready to face the crises and increased defense budgets that a return to Cold War conditions would spawn?" And would increased pressure from the West "enhance the well-being or nourish the hope for liberty of the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union?" Kissinger thought not.

KISSINGER'S WARINESS OF—indeed, his opposition to—a foreign policy shaped by ideology transcended the immediate circumstances of the détente era. Ideology, he believed, was not only the enemy of détente; it was also the enemy of a stable international order. And the problem was not just Communist ideology. America's universalist pretensions were also a danger. No matter what the source, Kissinger argued, as a general rule "ideological conflict" tended only to compound international instabilities, to "deepen international schisms."

Like Hans Morgenthau, the founder of modern realism, Kissinger asserted that "in the great periods of cabinet diplomacy," especially during the nineteenth century, "diplomats spoke the same language, not only in the sense that French was the lingua franca, but more importantly because they tended to understand intangibles in the same manner. A similar outlook about aims and methods eases the task of diplomacy—it may even be a precondition for it." To establish and to maintain international peace and stability required setting ideological differences aside and establishing a common understanding that transcended ideology, an understanding based on the amoral imperatives of geopolitics. "The greatest need of the contemporary international system," Kissinger insisted, was not an agreed concept of right and wrong, which was impossible, but "an agreed concept of order."

As a matter of principle, Kissinger believed the United States had no more right to impose its ideology on others than the Soviet Union did. Exasperated by critics who demanded that détente give way to more pressure for change in the Soviet Union, Kissinger noted in 1973 that "for half a century we have objected to Communist efforts to alter the domestic structures of other countries. For a generation of Cold War we sought to ease the risks produced by competing ideologies. Are we now to come full circle and insist on domestic compatibility as a condition of progress?" As Kissinger saw it, the goal of American foreign policy should not be to wage the ideological struggle with Soviet Communism, but to "manage" the "clash of ideologies," to "transform ideological conflict into constructive participation in building a better world," to "harness the rivalry of the nuclear superpowers, first into coexistence and then mold coexistence into a more positive and cooperative future."

SUCH A NON-IDEOLOGICAL approach to foreign policy was alien to American sensibilities, and Kissinger was well aware of this. He conceived it as his great task during the Nixon and Ford years—it was a task worthy of a lone cowboy—to try to wean Americans away from their sentimental idealism, from their habitual fondness for ideological crusades, and to make them see the virtue and the necessity of pursuing the more modest aims of equilibrium and stability. Kissinger insisted in 1974 that Americans focus not on the Soviet Union's domestic behavior but use its international behavior as the "primary index of our relationship." Beyond this, Americans might "use our influence to the maximum to alleviate suffering and to respond to humane appeals." Above all, Americans had to accept reality. The Soviet Union was not going away, and its system was unlikely to change appreciably for many, many decades to come.

Insofar as Kissinger held out any hope for internal change in the Soviet empire—and on occasion even he felt compelled to dangle some hope of an eventual

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THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Friday, 29 October

2:00-4:00 p.m. *World Literature*. Chair: **John Ellis** (UC Santa Cruz).
Sir Hugh Lloyd Jones (Oxford): "Goethe and the Greeks."
Michael Moses (Duke): "Magical Realism as a World Genre."
Gary Saul Morson (Northwestern): "Dostoevsky and the Literature of Process."

4:30-5:30 p.m. Poetry Reading by **Charles Wright** from his work in progress.

Saturday, 30 October

9:00-11:00 noon. *Cervantes in a World Context*. Chair: **Dario Fernandez-Morera** (Northwestern).
Diana Wilson (University of Denver): "Cervantes and the Indies."
Howard Young (Pomona): "Conversations between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza."
James Parr (UC Riverside): "Don Quixote: Translation and Interpretation."

2:00-4:00 p.m. *The Humanities in the Undergraduate Curriculum*. Chair: **Mark Bauerlein** (Emory).
Kathy Eden (Columbia University): "The Great Books in the Undergraduate Curriculum."
John Briggs (UC Riverside): "Composition and the Humanities."
Thomas F. Bertonneau (ALSC): "Orality, Literacy, and the Humanities."

8:00 p.m. Banquet, followed by an address by **Sir Ferdinand Mount**, Editor in Chief, *Times Literary Supplement*.

Sunday, 31 October (Concurrent Sessions)

9:00-11:00 a.m. *Charles Wright, Poet and Three Critics*. Chair: **Eleanor Cook** (University of Toronto).
Bonnie Costello (Boston University): "The Passions of Charles Wright."
James Longenbach (University of Rochester): "The Landscapes of Charles Wright."
Willard Spiegelman (Southern Methodist University): "On Charles Wright."

Romantic Poetry. Chair: **Norman Fruman** (University of Minnesota).
Robert Gleckner (Duke): "Humpty Dumpty Blake."
Jerome McGann (University of Virginia): "Millennial Romanticism."
James Engell (Harvard): "Romantic Poems and Ideas."

Drama: Classic to Renaissance. Chair: **Mary Lefkowitz** (Wellesley).
Charles Marowitz (Malibu Stage Company): "Shakespearean Acting – Clue to Action."
Tom Hester (North Carolina State): "Reading the 'Tale' in The Merchant of Venice."
Eric Gans (UCLA): "Aeschylus to Racine – Drama's Internal Scene."

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respite before an American populace ever desirous of "simple solutions"—this change would come not through confrontation, and much less through ideological confrontation. It would come only through détente and the relaxation of tensions. "Changes in Soviet society have already occurred," Kissinger declared in 1974, at the height of the Brezhnev era, "and more will come." But such changes were "most likely to develop through an evolution that can best go forward in an environment of decreasing international tensions. A renewal of the Cold War will hardly encourage the Soviet Union to change its emigration policies or adopt a more benevolent attitude toward dissent." It was détente that had "generated the ferment and the demand for openness we are now witnessing."

Again, it would be through détente that such openness would be realized. Kissinger endorsed the argument advanced by Cold War liberals and doves "that the reason the Soviet system was able to maintain its authoritarian hold was because of its invocation of foreign danger, and that to the degree that the foreign danger diminished it would not be able to maintain the more repressive aspects of its system." In the long run, Kissinger told members of Congress in 1973, he believed that "this will turn out to be a correct judgment." By reducing the danger of war, by denying the Soviets an enemy, and by "forcing the Soviet system into a cooperative relationship with the rest of the world in the field of foreign policy," détente would "over a period of time mitigate their system."

IV.

THIS WAS KISSINGER'S strategy and philosophy in the 1970s. It was patiently elaborated in numerous speeches throughout his eight years in office, then expounded in the thoughtful prose of his first two volumes of memoirs. So what are we to make of his present claim that he and the Ford administration scored a "strategic victory" by exploiting, through the human rights and peaceful change provisions in the Helsinki Final Act, what "we had come to recognize as the latent vulnerabilities of the Soviet empire?" Are we to believe that in defiance of his own carefully constructed strategy and his own well-articulated philosophy, Kissinger sought to use the Helsinki process to strike at precisely those internal structures of the Soviet system which he had so persistently declared out-of-bounds according to the rules of détente? Are we to accept Kissinger's claim that he deliberately tried to exploit weaknesses in the Soviet system and to hasten its demise, when we know that his foreign policy of the 1970s rested on the twin premises of Soviet strength and the unalterable reality of coexistence? And what exactly happened at Helsinki? In what way can the Helsinki Final Act be understood as a turning point in the Cold War?

To answer these questions requires putting the Helsinki conference back into its historical context. Kissinger would like us to forget that context, and to view Helsinki only from a post-1989 perspective, as an important and logical step on the path to our inevitable victory in the Cold War. But our victory was not inevitable. In 1975, indeed, it was virtually inconceivable. Kissinger's claims may appear plausible from a post-Cold-War perspective—they are plausible *only* from that misleading perspective—but when it comes to explaining the actions and the motives of participants in historical events, it is the historian's task to try to recreate "reality" as it appeared to contemporaries. Writing history backwards can often yield important ideas about the past; but in careless hands—or in the hands of an interested party—it can produce error and distortion.

To understand the Helsinki conference in its historical context is to understand why so many critics from the left and the right viewed it as a capitulation to the Soviet Union, as a defeat for the United States and the West, as holding little promise of a better future. The conference was the culmination of a process that Kissinger himself had long viewed with a varying mixture of skepticism, scorn, and concern. And with good reason: the initial impetus for a pan-European conference had come from Moscow. Soviet leaders, sensing the distress of Europe, and especially Germany, over the continuing tensions of the Cold War, and sensing also their unease with the policies of the United States, especially in its conduct of the war in Vietnam, had hoped to exploit this disquiet in the Western alliance by appealing to a vague but growing desire for some assertion of European independence.

ORIGINALLY, THE Soviet idea for a pan-European conference had excluded the United States, and although Washington convinced its NATO allies not to allow such a wedge to be driven through the trans-Atlantic partnership, the conference continued to have an anti-American flavor. The United States was finally allowed to participate, but the clear purpose of the planned Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was for the Europeans—that is, the West Europeans, the East Europeans, and the Soviet Union—to take some control of their own common destiny and to establish a continental modus vivendi. For the Soviet Union, this meant above all the acceptance by Western Europe—the formal and legal acceptance—of the legitimacy and, therefore, the permanence of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, including, very importantly, East Germany.

Kissinger would later argue that the intense Soviet desire for the legitimization of its imperial position in Europe was a sign of weakness and insecurity. This may have been the case; but throughout the early and mid-1970s many Americans, especially conservatives but also many in the Nixon and Ford administrations, including Kissinger, viewed the conference with genuine trepidation. The West was insecure, too. Kissinger did his best to slow the process down, to burden it by linking it to other matters, and to make its accomplishment contingent on the satisfaction of American demands on other issues. He tried to counter the drift of Western allies toward accommodation with Moscow with his proclamation of an American-sponsored "Year of Europe" in 1973, and with an initiative for establishing a "new Atlantic charter." These efforts were major diplomatic failures. They had the opposite of their intended effect: they further revealed the determination of the European allies to display their independence from Washington.

EVENTUALLY, THROUGH assiduous work with the allies, but mostly thanks to residual allied fears of being left to confront the Soviets by themselves, the United States managed to corral the West Europeans and to prevent the worst manifestations of European neutralism. But Kissinger never really changed his sour view of the conference. In *White House Years*, published four years after what Kissinger now alleges was the West's great triumph at Helsinki, he disparaged the European conference as a Soviet ploy, championed in the West by that most untrustworthy of European leaders, Willy Brandt. In *Years of Upheaval*, published seven years after Helsinki, Kissinger makes a few references to the evolving European conference, but he gives no hint that he believes it had produced anything worth commenting on, and least of all in the area of human rights. The foresight that Kissinger retroactively attributes to himself today—that he both recognized and then exploited Soviet vulnerabilities in 1975—is nowhere to be found in Kissinger's writings of 1979 and 1982.

In fact, those memoirs reflected the mood and the reality of 1975 and subse-

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quent years far more accurately than Kissinger's post-1989 revisionist account. At the time of the European conference, few on either side of the Atlantic seriously contemplated a loosening of Soviet control in Eastern Europe, much less the eventual collapse of Soviet Communism. The "tendencies," to borrow Kissinger's word, were all in the opposite direction. The animating impulses behind the conference were the insistence upon an acceptance of the division of Europe as an enduring reality, in order to lessen the tensions and the anxieties of the Cold War, and then, on the basis of such a reconciliation with reality, to make life as bearable as possible for Europeans on both sides of the divide.

IT HARDLY BEARS mentioning that, notwithstanding his present claims, Kissinger at the time took little if any interest in the so-called "human rights" issues of Basket III of the Helsinki Final Act. It would have been out of character for him to do so in any case, nor would pressing for human rights have fit well within his strategy of détente. In none of his writings before this new volume of memoirs did Kissinger ever pretend to take those issues seriously. Even in his account of the Helsinki conference in *Diplomacy*, published just five years ago, Kissinger claimed no role in pushing Basket III, stating only, and with perhaps deliberate opacity, that "the American delegation contributed" to the final provisions. In the present volume, Kissinger in one place asserts that "the Western democracies pushed Basket III and peaceful change to exploit what we had come to recognize as the latent vulnerabilities of the Soviet empire." That "we" is a clever bit of legerdemain. Elsewhere he admits that "I for one was initially skeptical about the possibilities of Basket III." It is fair to assume that Kissinger overcame his initial skepticism only after 1989, when the unintended consequences of Basket III became manifest.

And the consequences *were* unintended. Kissinger aside, even the proponents of the provisions in Basket III did not believe in 1975 that they were planting the seeds of a future revolution in the Soviet empire, for the simple reason that in the mid-1970s no one inside or outside the Soviet system believed that such a revolution was possible. Just about everyone shared the view, which Kissinger himself at the time repeatedly advanced, that the Soviet state, for all its weaknesses, was strong enough to persist. As Martin Malia has pointed out, not even Soviet dissidents had "any clear idea of how advanced the crisis of the system was, even as late as the end of the 1970s."

FOR THE EUROPEANS who really pushed Basket III, the purpose of expanding East-West contacts, and of calling for an easing of repression in the Eastern bloc, was not to undermine the Soviet Empire. Their goals, too, were in keeping with the conference's broader purpose of accepting the legitimacy and the likely permanence of that empire. The idea was to alleviate the worst manifestations of the division of Europe, not to undo it. Kissinger himself in 1976 explained the purposes of Helsinki entirely within the familiar context of détente and the "imperative of coexistence." It was, he said, a Western European effort "to strengthen their bilateral and regional ties with the countries of Eastern Europe. We hope that this process will help heal the divisions of Europe.... We will continue to pursue measures to improve the lives of the people in Eastern Europe in basic human terms—such as freer emigration, the unification of families, greater flow of information, increased economic interchange, and more opportunities for travel." Kissinger rejected more revolutionary goals.

In *White House Years*, he recounted how Willy Brandt, in trying to convince the Americans to support the European conference, had invoked "the standard European argument that it was desired precisely by the most independent countries of Eastern Europe as a means of buttressing their autonomy." But Kissinger at the time saw through the hollowness of this argument, and sneeringly dismissed it. Brandt, he wrote, could never explain "why the Soviets were pressing for a conference that would loosen their hold on the satellite orbit." Why, indeed.

BY 1975, like other leading Germans, Brandt had given up even on the dream of the reunification of West and East Germany. Brandt confessed "that I have stopped speaking about reunification." As Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice have pointed out, the unification of Germany "seemed an academic point in the world of 1975." In his pursuit of *Ostpolitik*, Brandt had come to accept "the original Eastern view that reunification should take a back seat to the relaxation of broader East-West tensions." The Helsinki Final Act's declaration concerning the "peaceful change of borders," therefore, was empty symbolism, and in its time it was understood to be such.

In reality, as Zelikow and Rice note, the Act "came to stand for acceptance of the postwar borders and the de facto settle-

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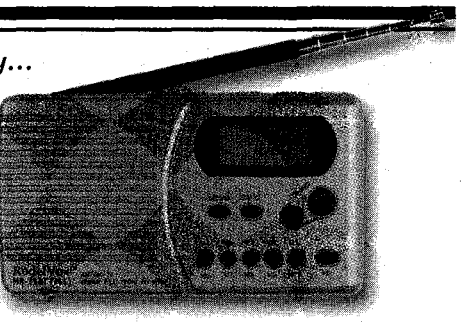

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ment imposed by the victors." The West Germans "believed that they had to accept the status quo in order to change it someday." But as the years passed, the "West German timetable ... seemed to be measured on a time scale more familiar to geologists than to politicians." As late as 1988, Helmut Kohl, when asked whether Mikhail Gorbachev might someday agree to reunification, answered that "I do not write futuristic novels like [H.G.] Wells. What you ask now, that is in the realm of fantasy."

Kissinger was certainly no more zealous for reunification than the Germans, not in 1975 and not in 1990. As Zelikow and Rice point out, "Henry Kissinger had for many years thought the German question secondary to the overall management of the U.S. relationship with the Soviet Union. Thus, for the United States détente and a modus vivendi with the Soviets on Germany went hand in hand." Brent Scowcroft, the long-time aide, associate, and friend of Kissinger, expressed a most Kissingerian view of reunification in the memoirs that he recently co-authored with George Bush. Even as late as 1990, Scowcroft recalls, "I was skeptical about the wisdom of pursuing German unification.... What was wrong with a divided Germany as long as the situation was stable? The very process of unification could be extremely destabilizing, and could even lead to conflict." Kissinger certainly held this view at the time of Helsinki, and for many years afterward. And so his present argument—that he favored the peaceful change provisions in the Final Act as laying the groundwork for a future reunification—is hard to take seriously.

Historians, as opposed to revisionist memoirists, have described Helsinki not as a "strategic victory" for a West determined to exploit alleged Soviet vulnerabilities, but as the "high point of détente." The most favorable interpretation of Helsinki at the time, and in the years that followed, was that the West had not given up anything of real importance. As A.W. DePorte put it in 1979, "The Soviet success in this drawn-out but essentially marginal policy was a gain for them by their lights but not a loss for the West, except for the loss of illusions. It changed nothing in the European status quo except to reveal more clearly—to any who could not see—what the status quo has been and is."

THIS WAS THE BEST that could be said about Helsinki. But there was also a darker interpretation. For in the years following the European conference, Soviet behavior went from bad to worse. In 1975, the very year in which Helsinki was signed, Moscow continued to arrest dissidents; and although Helsinki theoretically provided the dissidents and their Western supporters a legalistic club with which to beat them, Soviet leaders were impervious to this pressure throughout the remainder of the 1970s. By 1980 they had just about stamped out the dissident movement. As Malia writes, the Soviets considered their human rights pledges "a mere formality ... a minor annoyance as against the great gain of international legitimation of their external empire."

In the context of the 1970s, which was the only context that mattered to both Kissinger and his many critics at the time, were the Soviets wrong? Kissinger now argues that the Soviet Union in "its desperate quest for legitimacy" had paid a fateful price for that legitimacy by agreeing to the human rights and peaceful change clauses of the Helsinki Final Act. But this is a complete distortion of the reality of 1975. There was nothing desperate about the Soviets' circumstances in the mid-1970s. Whatever their mounting internal difficulties, and even in reformist government circles these were thought to be solvable, in the global competition the Soviets were on a roll.

There are good grounds for believing that Helsinki, in fact, marked the inauguration of a new phase of Soviet aggressiveness. "In the 1960s and early 1970s, under Brezhnev," as Malia among others has noted, the Soviets "had built up their strength to the level of that of the United States and could therefore accept the negotiations leading to SALT I and détente. As the 1970s progressed, however, the 'correlation of forces' seemed to shift in favor of the Soviets, so toward the end of that decade they themselves took to acting 'from positions of strength.' The shift began with the fall of South Vietnam and the signing of the Helsinki agreements in 1975." Helsinki, the "high point of détente," was also the high point of Soviet confidence, and it helped set the stage for the more aggressive Soviet moves, in Angola, in the Horn of Africa, in Cambodia, and in Afghanistan, which led in the United States to the final renunciation of détente and the inauguration of the confrontational policies of the early Reagan years.

V.

SO KISSINGER'S CLAIM that the West scored a "strategic victory" at Helsinki is unsupportable. His suggestion that he consciously intended to use the Helsinki provisions to exploit Soviet vulnerabilities and eventually to bring down the USSR is, at best, thoroughly misleading. For anyone trying to understand Kissinger's broad strategy, it is also confusing. Had Kissinger actually possessed the intention that he now imputes to himself, it would have contradicted every major premise of his strategy in the 1970s.

Kissinger's purpose in *Years of Renewal* is precisely to blur the record, to cover up the traces of his failures for a generation of readers that has presumably forgotten them. His revisionist interpretation of Helsinki, and of his own role in shaping its provisions, is as artful as it is transparent. It is an attempt to create a link between Kissinger's actions in the 1970s and the events of the Reagan years, to draw a seamless connection between his policy of détente and the collapse of the Soviet empire and the unraveling of Soviet Communism a decade and a half later. It is an effort, above all, to distort the historical record, so that détente no longer appears to have been a failure at all—and, more importantly, so that Kissinger himself, as the primary author and practitioner of détente, need no longer bear the historical responsibility for that failure.

But détente *was* a failure, and it was only with the reversal of détente and the return to confrontation in the Reagan years—that is, it was only with the repudiation and the rejection of Kissinger's strategy—that the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act took on their unintended and unforeseen significance. And détente did not fail in the 1970s only because the Watergate scandal destroyed presidential authority and robbed Kissinger of the tools to resist Soviet encroachments in Angola and elsewhere. This had always been Kissinger's contention, and defense, before he decided to try the more daring approach of claiming credit for victory in the Cold War.

KISSINGER USED TO argue, and with some plausibility, that the foreign and defense policies that Reagan later carried out had been politically impossible in the era of Vietnam and Watergate. In earlier writings, Kissinger acknowledged that détente had failed, but he laid the blame on an irresponsible Congress, on back-stabbing colleagues, on McGovernite liberals, on conservatives, on neo-conservatives, on Nixon—on just about everyone in the world except himself. And in *Years of Renewal* he continues to blame everyone for destroying détente even as he advances his novel assertion that some "Reaganite variant" of détente actually succeeded.

But what was clear at the time, and what remains clear in retrospect, is that détente failed also on its own merits. The Soviets never accepted the logic of détente. They never accepted the new

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rules of the road, the need for restraint, the need for cooperation for its own sake. Even in 1978 Stanley Hoffmann, not exactly a hawk, argued that it had become became "pretty hard" by the late 1970s "to find any evidence of Soviet moderation in conflicts in which Russia was directly or indirectly involved." There had been signs of moderation before 1973—before, that is, "the agreements that the Soviets needed were signed ... SALT I, with its recognition of parity; the trade and credit deals; Helsinki, with its acceptance of the division of Europe." But once the Soviets had gotten what they wanted from these deals with the West, they simply pocketed them and pressed ahead with their global ambitions. If Kissinger had bet that détente would tie the Soviets into an interdependent and, therefore, more restrained and cooperative relationship with the West, and Soviet leaders had bet that détente would demoralize the West and consolidate their own global position, then it appeared to Hoffmann in 1978 that the Soviet bet had "been more vindicated than America's."

The Soviets, it now seems clear, saw détente much as Kissinger's conservative and neo-conservative critics did: not as a mutual agreement for international restraint but as a Western retreat, as an acknowledgment by Washington that American power and American will were declining. As Ronald E. Powaski writes in his history of the Cold War published last year, "in the eyes of the Soviets, détente was a necessary accommodation by the West to a 'correlation of forces' that the Soviets viewed as increasingly favorable to the communist movement." Détente failed, moreover, not only in practice, but also in theory. As Martin Malia argues in *The Soviet Tragedy*, which appeared in 1994:

> the Cold War was not the product of rash policies or misunderstandings based on mutual ignorance that could be overcome by 'confidence-building measures,' as the philosophy of détente had it. It was, rather, the product of the genuine incompatibility of the interests and structures of the two 'camps,' as standard Soviet doctrine had it. In this perspective, the three or four years of détente were a kind of diplomatic NEP designed to build Soviet strength for a new offensive, and the ten years of renewed Soviet pressure after 1975 were a return to the system's norm.

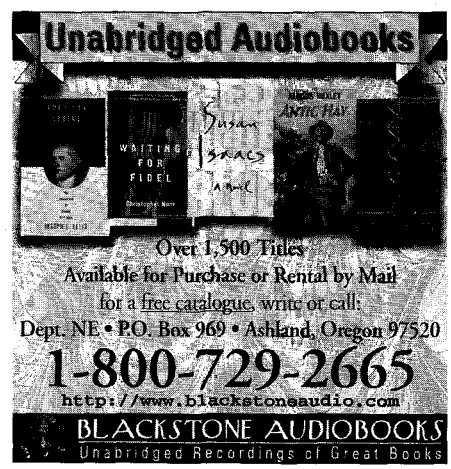
This was precisely what conservatives and neo-conservatives charged during the Nixon and Ford years: that détente was sapping the West's will and allowing the Soviets first to consolidate and then to extend their global power. And it is the continuing accuracy of this charge that no doubt explains why Kissinger's attack on neo-conservatives, some of whom he calls his friends, is even more vitriolic in *Years of Renewal* than in his previous volumes. Kissinger depicts the neo-conservatives of the 1970s as wild-eyed Wilsonians, oblivious to geopolitics, who thought they could vanquish the Soviet Union overnight with a "burst of ideological élan."

BUT IT WAS precisely the burst of ideological élan represented by the election of Ronald Reagan that began to turn the mounting disaster spawned by détente around. Reagan did so not by pursuing his own "variant" of détente—as Kissinger would now have us believe—but by pursuing in his first term the kinds of confrontational policies and ideological challenges that Kissinger had opposed so consistently and so vigorously in the 1970s. Was it a "variant" of détente to declare the Soviet Union an "evil empire," to accelerate the arms race and abjure for four years any serious effort at arms control? Was it a "variant" of détente to support "freedom fighters" in Nicaragua, Angola, Afghanistan, and Cambodia? Were Reagan's policies nothing more than Nixonian détente dressed up in Wilsonian garb, as Kissinger now claims?

Remarkably, a mere five years ago, Kissinger had very different answers to these questions than he offers today. In *Diplomacy* Kissinger acknowledged that there had been an "enormous difference" between Reagan's tactics and those of Nixon and Ford. Reagan had presented the Soviets with a "a direct moral challenge from which all of his predecessors had recoiled." He was the first Cold War president "to take the offensive both ideologically and geopolitically." Under Reagan, "America's goal was no longer relaxation of tensions but crusade and conversion." Reagan's first term, therefore, had "marked the formal end of the period of détente." Reagan and his advisers "considered concern with the balance of power too confining and too pessimistic. They strove not for gradualism, but for a final outcome."

In *Years of Renewal*, Kissinger indicts the neo-conservatives for this kind of thinking, as hopelessly divorced from reality. But in *Diplomacy*, he argued that "this faith gave the Reagan team an extraordinary tactical flexibility." While Kissinger gave "considerable" credit for the Cold War victory to Reagan's predecessors and to George Bush, he was unequivocal in declaring that it was "Ronald Reagan's presidency which marked the turning point." One can only guess what happened to Kissinger's interpretation between the publication of *Diplomacy* and his writing of *Years of Renewal*. Somehow, one suspects, the old neo-conservative criticism of détente had once again gotten under Kissinger's skin, and he determined to answer it very differently than he had in the past—by claiming, preposterously, that Reagan's policies were merely variants of his own policies, and that he and Nixon ought to share more equally in the credit for the Cold War victory.

WE MAY NEVER KNOW exactly what role Reagan's policies played in the Soviet Union's downfall. Much of the credit for the undoing of Soviet Communism belongs to Mikhail Gorbachev, whose bumbling efforts to reform Communism led to consequences that could not be foreseen by him, much less by any Western observer. But we do know some of the ways in which Reagan's policies may have contributed to the chain of events that led to the upheavals of 1989. We know that Reagan's arms buildup, and especially Reagan's commitment to the Strategic Defense Initiative, panicked Soviet leaders into believing, first, that a more rapid and radical economic restructuring would be necessary if the Soviet Union was to compete in the new arms race both quantitatively and qualitatively, and second, that the Soviet Union therefore needed a respite from the Cold War while it got its own house in order. The first judgment helped to convince Gorbachev to undertake the political and economic reforms that quickly flew beyond his control. The second judgment caused Gorbachev to carry out a deliberate strategy of retreat on the world stage, a tactical measure that Malia likens to Lenin's agreement to the Brest-Litovsk treaty in 1917, but which led, again, to the entirely unforeseen unraveling of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe.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It was Reagan's restoration of ideology to foreign policy, and the ideological challenge that he posed to Moscow, that to some extent sparked and to some extent encouraged dissident movements in the Soviet bloc. Since the end of the Cold War, more than one former dissident has pointed to Reagan's "evil empire" speech as an inspiration and a turning point in their struggle. Would the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act have acquired their historic significance in the absence of Reagan's challenge? Would they have provided a successful rallying point for dissidents if détente, with its rigid commitment to equilibrium and the status quo, had continued to be American policy on into the 1980s? Again, we will never know. What we do know, however, is that during the years of détente the dissident movements in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern bloc were going nowhere. But they erupted in the Reagan years, in the context of renewed confrontation. This was probably not a historical accident, and there is at least a plausible case for cause and effect.

WHY HAS KISSINGER taken the risk of advancing such transparently ludicrous claims? There is something dishonorable in his distortion of history. So what if he was wrong in the 1970s? America has long since forgiven and, indeed, forgotten. Today Kissinger's prestige may be almost as great as it was in his heyday during Nixon's first term. Republican congressmen consider themselves honored to be in his company. Just being seen with Henry Kissinger is a mark of seriousness and legitimacy. Politicians and policymakers of both parties continue to look to Kissinger for advice on subjects ranging from NATO to China. (I wonder how many are even aware that his prescriptions for American relations with China—denying Beijing an enemy, eschewing ideological confrontation, and trying to draw China into a web of interdependence—are exactly the prescriptions that he advanced for dealing with the Soviet Union in the era of détente.)

Kissinger, in short, is still a national and international celebrity. So whence comes this continuing need for vindication, this continuing bitterness at old enemies—now "friends"—who today no longer even remember what the battles were about? One should perhaps leave this to the psychologists, but Kissinger himself provides a clue. He seems to do so almost intentionally. In one of his many fascinating discussions of Richard Nixon's character, Kissinger notes that "Nixon's convictions, while firm and—in foreign policy—carefully thought out, did not seem able to sustain him unless they resonated not just with public acclaim but with the approval of the classes he admired and despised at the same time. His actions were in the mold of heroes, but Nixon doomed them by a frantic quest for stardom shading into efforts to vindicate his perception of the ruthlessness of his rivals."

And then, in one of the frankest moments of his memoir, Kissinger makes a rather striking admission. "Ultimately," he reflects, what "proved so unsettling, even threatening" about Nixon's "obvious and unending struggle with himself" was that "deep down one could never be certain that what one found so disturbing in Nixon might not also be a reflection of some suppressed flaw within oneself." ■

The Unburied Life

By HELEN VENDLER

A Gift Imprisoned: The Poetic Life of Matthew Arnold by Ian Hamilton

(Basic Books, 241 pp., $24)

THE PROVOCATIVE CASE of Matthew Arnold is raised again in this new but truncated life of that extraordinary man. By entitling his account *A Gift Imprisoned: The Poetic Life*, Ian Hamilton (a poet himself, and the author of the first full biography of Robert Lowell) gives short shrift to the last thirty-five years of his subject's life, during which Arnold's poetic composition declined while his writing of critical prose increased. Those latter three and a half decades of strenuous work occupy only the last fifth of Hamilton's book, which in effect ends when Arnold is thirty-one. One can imagine an antithetical twin to this new biography: it would be called *A Gift Released: The Critical Life of Matthew Arnold*, and it would go from strength to strength until Arnold's death from heart disease in 1888, at the age of sixty-six.

Is it plausible to split a man thus in two? Does Arnold the mature critic have nothing to do with Arnold the younger poet? Can we, in fact, understand the poetry adequately if we confine ourselves to its own chronological boundaries? Does anything of the later prose help us to understand the earlier poetry?

When I was a girl, I knew nothing of Matthew Arnold but his verse. Later I was surprised to find, when reading, the breadth and the wit of his prose—the submerged nine-tenths of the Arnoldian iceberg. I was already aware of the iceberg's famous remark when he was thirty-one: "I am past thirty and three parts iced over, and my pen, it seems to me, is even stiffer and more cramped than my feeling." Arnold meant seriously this heartbreaking disclosure; and yet the energetic, even racy prose of the rest of his life was not that of a gelid soul.

How, then, are we to read Arnold's life? Is it—as Hamilton would suggest—a tragic one, in which an early poetic gift is "imprisoned" and stifled by a later married life of repressed romance and daily drudgery? Or is it—as one might counter—an imaginatively successful life, in which a great critic, having trained his taste by the study of poetry and the practice of it "from the inside," decided to embark on a vigorous analysis of the state of his country? Arnold's ambition—which was nothing less than to reform English culture—is not the ambition of an "imprisoned" sensibility. Perhaps we should pay less attention to Arnold's own foreboding that he might not continue to write poetry, and pay more attention to the ardors released in his prose. After all, many writers (Joyce and Faulkner come to mind) began by thinking that they would be poets only to discover that they were cut out for something else.

We consider it disappointing, perhaps, when a young poet finds his eventual lifework in criticism (rather than in fiction or in drama). The gap between imaginative writing and critical writing is a real one, and Arnold mourned the departure of the wistful passion that had awakened his verse. Yet intellectual analysis and

HELEN VENDLER is the author, most recently, of *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* and *Seamus Heaney* (both published by Harvard University Press).

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reforming zeal—the passions that awakened his prose—are also primary drives, and in Arnold they demanded fulfillment as much as his reverie and his grief had once done. No one can choose his own impulses, and it was Arnold's misfortune to have several—a fact that originally made him think he had none.

ARNOLD'S FAMOUS AND overpowering father, Thomas Arnold of Rugby, had one drive and one alone: to make his students into Christian leaders. In that ambition, he succeeded: his students went out from Rugby to govern England and the Empire. But Matt was a puzzle. His father wrote, as his son was ending his Rugby schooldays, that

> Matt does not know what it is to work because he so little knows what it is to think.... I think that he is not so idle as he was, and that there is a better prospect of his beginning to read in earnest. Alas! that we should have to talk of prospect only, and of no performance as yet which deserves the name of "earnest reading."

And yet Matt won a scholarship to Balliol (as he had won prizes at Rugby for Latin verse and English verse). He was one of only two out of thirty to win the Oxford scholarship, but his father's response was: "I had not the least expectation of his being successful. The news actually filled me with astonishment." (I quote this remark from Park Honan's fine biography *Matthew Arnold*, which appeared in 1981. It is still the book to read for a balanced and original account of Arnold's life.)

By the end of Arnold's first year at Oxford, his forty-six-year-old father had died prematurely of a heart attack, and the son was left to bear, as an internalized self-criticism, his dead father's expectation that his sons would engage in public service. It is no wonder that Arnold adopted, almost immediately, a different father, who preached a better lesson—the lesson of self-chosen vocation. This second father was Shakespeare. The sonnet to Shakespeare was written within two years of Thomas Arnold's death, when his son was twenty-two. It characterizes Shakespeare as a man "Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honoured, self-secure."

Another sonnet ("To a Friend") of the same period, after praising Homer and Epictetus, gives "special thanks" for Sophocles, "Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole." These early moral aims—to discover, through Shakespeare's example, his own selfhood, and to see all of life disinterestedly, as Sophocles taught him—remained before Arnold's eyes forever. When he was still a student, both aims seemed compatible with poetry; but it is significant that the poets whom he honors in these sonnets were writers of plays, whose eyes were on the panorama of society rather than on the inner, hidden life proper to lyric. Arnold's own destiny was eventually to make him, too, look toward that wider social panorama, forsaking the intimate landscape of his best private poems.

At Oxford and after, Arnold became the poet of what he himself diagnosed, in the Preface to his *Poems* of 1853, as "the dialogue of the mind with itself ... in which the suffering finds no vent in action; ... in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done." As his father's son, he wanted action, wanted to *do*; but he found that he could not change his inner self. With respect to that, there was nothing to be done. And yet no single career presented itself to the young Matthew Arnold as satisfactory. (No one says to a student, "Your destiny is to be a wide-ranging writer in poetry and prose, thinking about religion, social welfare, the claims of the imagination, the differences between French and English culture, the ways literary taste is formed, the vexations of translation, the role of the state in a democracy, the evolution of Christianity, and a hundred other things.")

And so, insensibly, the familial expectation—that one should be a forceful headmaster, a scholar, a lawyer, or a civil servant—made Arnold think of himself as a failure, because he was only writing poetry. He did take up, at twenty-five, a sinecure as Private Secretary to Lord Lansdowne, a post that he left at twenty-nine for a better-paying Inspectorship of Schools that enabled him to marry Frances Wightman. But the Secretaryship was obtained through family influence, and the Inspectorship through Lord Lansdowne's influence; in neither case had Arnold felt any vocation for the work. During his first trip as school Inspector in Manchester, he wrote bravely to his new wife that "I think I shall get interested in the schools after a little time."

Shortly before taking up the post of Inspector, perhaps during his honeymoon, Arnold composed "Dover Beach," the poem by which he is still best known. In it, his mind turned to the chief predicament of his society: its loss of the cultural idealism and personal hope once provided by Christianity.

> The Sea of Faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round
> earth's shore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd;

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But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges
drear
And naked shingles of the world.

In such a passage we see Arnold's technical strength as a poet—the expression that ebbs and flows with the movement of thought; the managing of vowels (as "full," "round," "shore," and "folds" peak into radiance at "bright girdle"); the way in which "withdrawing roar,/Retreating" amplifies itself phonetically at "roar" and ebbs in "retreating." Arnold is never less than deft as a stylist, and this deftness makes his lyrics (though not his narrative poems) transparently readable and often piercing.

YET SOMETHING CENTRAL to Arnold's sensibility is revealed in "Dover Beach." The poem shows Arnold's tendency to keep the private life separate from social life. "Ah, love," says the young husband, "let *us* be true to one another" (the italics are mine)—because surely, given the nature of the world, we can count on no one else for either love or fidelity. I italicize Arnold's contradictory statements:

Ah, *love*, let us be *true*
To one another! for the world,
which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor *love*, nor light,
Nor *certitude*, nor peace, nor help for
pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle
and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

It is not clear how the lovers can love and be constant in a world which in fact has neither love nor certitude. The fissure that is visible here between the private and the social suggests that the Arnoldian lyric, unable to bridge those two worlds, is doomed to sequester itself within the first. Yet the real interest in the poem gathers toward the last terrible image of the social world, in which one cannot tell friend from foe.

Another fissure comes into view: the "seeming" world is described in terms solely aesthetic ("various, beautiful, new"), while the "real" world is described in terms solely emotional, intellectual, and moral (as it lacks "joy, love, light, certitude, peace, help for pain"). The aesthetic is sequestered in the deceptive, while the other, negative, qualities are said to be "real." No poetry that regards the aesthetic as deceptive can long endure. Yet for a moment, on his honeymoon, Arnold stands balanced between love and a disbelief in love, fidelity and a disbelief in certitude; and in that moment he writes a poem that compels, by its own vacillation, our assent.

HAMILTON, A POET HIMSELF, gives less credit than he might to Arnold's inner honesty and seriousness. Of course Arnold mistook the nature of his own poetic talent by attempting to treat "noble," "epic," "heartening" stories from ancient literature (in such works as *Sohrab and Rustum*, *Merope*, and *Balder Dead*). Yet Hamilton's way of writing about Arnold's poetic failure is a contemptuous one. He remarks, on the narrative poem *Balder Dead* (1855):

> The good student Arnold, we suspect, is resolved first of all to cover what he knows to be the set requirements, as if for an end-of-term prize poem: the high-flown rhetorical address, the magnificent-ceremony episode, the heroic-action sequence, the hair-raising Hades evocation, and so on.

Surely no one so genuine as Arnold sat down to write poetry thinking, even unconsciously, "Now I'll do the magnificent-ceremony episode," much less "Now I'll do the hair-raising Hades evocation." Hamilton continues, in the same dismissive vein, deploring Arnold's lack of narrative momentum:

> Arnold's heroic posture is at best a grim-jawed, pumped-up thing. Sky-high apostrophes, big brazen adjectives, mechanically strummed pentameters, gratuitous inversions—all the epic-style-aids are deployed, but with no real story-telling drive.

When he comes to *Merope*, the failed Sophoclean drama that Arnold composed in 1856–57, Hamilton adopts once again this strained jauntiness:

> [The chorus] stands around listening to long speeches . . . with not much more to offer in response than the occasional: "And I too say, *Ah me*!" The Greek gods are a problem, also. Like the chorus, they have to be there even though Arnold does not quite know what to do with them. But then he is generally uncertain when it comes to fathoming Greek moral values.

From what peak of Hellenic certainty, I want to ask, does Hamilton declare that Arnold, with respect to fathoming Greek moral values, "is generally uncertain"? And how faithful an account of the chorus's speeches in *Merope* is it to say that the chorus has "not much more to offer in response than the occasional 'And I too say, *Ah me*!'" It is true that once (and only once) the chorus says "*Ah me*" as its entire response, but Arnold also gives it responses and counsels running to eighty lines or more.

The chorus in *Merope* often has some moving Arnoldian things to say:

But, more than all unplumb'd,
Unscal'd, untrodden, is the heart of
Man. . . .

Yea, and not only have we not explor'd
That wide and various world, the heart
of others,
But even our own heart, that narrow
world
Bounded in our own breast, we hardly
know,
Of our own actions dimly trace the
causes.
Whether a natural obscureness, hiding
That region in perpetual cloud,
Or our own want of effort, be the bar.

It is easy to forget how stirring it was to read, in pre-Freudian days, assertions of the existence of the unconscious and of the denial of unconscious motives.

ELSEWHERE IN *Merope*, Arnold attempts—by adopting dimeters—a more "Greek" swiftness, as the chorus recounts, in explaining the origin of a constellation, how Arcas unwittingly slew his mother Callisto after she had been transformed into a bear. Callisto, unable to speak, grieves and is recognized by her son:

Low moans half utter'd
What speech refus'd her;
Tears cours'd, tears human,
Down those disfigur'd
Once human cheeks.
With unutterable foreboding
Her son, heart-stricken, ey'd her.
The Gods had pity, made them Stars.
Stars now they sparkle
In the northern Heaven;
The guard Arcturus,
The guard-watch'd Bear.

Hamilton might have made something of these efforts by Arnold to naturalize Greek literary effects into English. Yet he exhibits no interest at all in Arnold's Greek tragedy, concluding only that "there is a sadness in contemplating the whole enterprise: so diligent, so well intentioned and so wrong!" (Hamilton here unconsciously echoes Arnold's "So various, so beautiful, so new," proving how the power of "Dover Beach" lingers in the mind.)

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Hamilton seems to agree with the diagnosis that Arnold made of his own case: that the congealing of his poetic talent sprang from the difficulty of writing poetry in the modern age. A more vigorous Arnold, according to Hamilton, might have made a stronger effort. Hamilton calls a letter that Arnold wrote at thirty-six about this predicament "his letter of resignation, one might say" from poetry. It is true that Arnold—with his parents' critical remarks always alive in him—blamed himself for his absence of poetic production. But might it not be truer to say that his ultimate adult vocation—the vocation of criticism—began to assert itself powerfully in him, rather than that he "resigned" voluntarily from poetry?

IT IS EASY to be taken in by Arnold's own version of his life, so plangently phrased in the poetry, and nowhere more plangently than in "Growing Old"—the poem from which Hamilton takes the prison of his subtitle. (The poem is undated, but it was probably written in Arnold's mid-forties.) To grow old, says the barely middle-aged Arnold in his most self-lacerating tone, is like this:

> It is to spend long days
> And not once feel that we were
> ever young;
> It is to add, immured
> In the hot prison of the present, month
> To month with weary pain.
>
> It is to suffer this,
> And feel but half, and feebly,
> what we feel.
> Deep in our hidden heart
> Festers the dull remembrance of
> a change,
> But no emotion—none.
>
> It is—last stage of all—
> When we are frozen up within, and quite
> The phantom of ourselves,
> To hear the world applaud the hollow
> ghost
> Which blamed the living man.

Hamilton thinks that here is the profound truth of Arnold's life. One answers, Yes, but....

For where, in Arnold's account of himself in "Growing Old," are the past and future swinging energies of the prose works? Or any sense of the brilliant mockery to be found in one of the earliest of these, Arnold's Oxford inaugural lecture "On Translating Homer" (which was contemporary with the failed *Merope*)? In 1857, Arnold had been elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, a post wherein one has to give three lectures a year. Full-time school inspector though he was, Arnold held on to the Oxford post for two five-year terms, and became—through his lectures published as *Essays in Criticism* (1865) and *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867)—the most important literary critic in England. And what, in "Growing Old," augurs the man of savage and denunciatory verve who will write *Culture and Anarchy* (1869)? Where in the poem is the man who will compose the bold, even blasphemous, revisionary writings on Biblical interpretation (*St. Paul and Protestantism* in 1870, *Literature and Dogma* in 1873, *God and the Bible* in 1875)? At the time of his death, Arnold was collecting the essays for *Essays in Criticism, Second Series* (which appeared posthumously).

In sum: busy though he was writing lengthy school reports, burdened though he was emotionally (not least by the tragic deaths of three of his four sons), occupied though he was with family affairs (he was one of eight children), Arnold went on writing, writing, writing. (Which meant that he went on thinking and feeling.) It is to limit the word "feeling" unduly to restrict it to the emotions that are congenial to the production of lyric poetry. If Arnold himself so limited the word (at least in "Growing Old"), we should not merely for that reason follow his example.

IF WE LOOK back from the prose-writer to the writer of poetry, we can see that Arnold's lyrics, though they strike an unforgettable Victorian elegiac note, embody only one part of the man. We cannot find in them satisfactory representations of his raillery, his social and historical breadth of concern, his intellectual and political convictions, his strong impulse to teach. The poems are those of a limited, if intense, talent. (The truly great poet puts all of himself and his age, somehow, into his poetry, even if he is a lyric poet. Think of Yeats.) We would have a smaller idea of Arnold the man if we did not know the prose. By looking back at the poetry through the prose, we can see how little we would have known of Arnold's mind and heart if the lyrics had been his only written communication of himself. That he went on writing—unlike, say, Rimbaud—suggests that his personality had other crucial aspects of itself to express.

Hamilton's funereal judgment (borrowed in part from Auden's remark that Arnold "thrust his gift in prison till it died") is not the only judgment to make, even if one considers solely Arnold's life as a poet. It is not a tragedy when an original minor poet succeeds in working his characteristic vein to the fullest. Arnold, I believe, did exactly that. He was the finest modern articulator of what he called "The Buried Life," the authentic life within ourselves of which we have only occasional glimpses:

> But often, in the world's most crowded
> streets,
> But often, in the din of strife,
> There rises an unspeakable desire
> After the knowledge of our buried life....
> And many a man in his own breast
> then delves,
> But deep enough, alas! none ever mines.
> And we have been on many thousand
> lines,
> And we have shown, on each,
> spirit and power;
> But hardly have we, for one little hour,
> Been on our own line, have we been
> ourselves.

Only rarely, when "Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear," is something revealed:

> A bolt is shot back somewhere in
> our breast,
> And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.
> The eye sinks inward, and the heart
> lies plain,
> And what we mean, we say, and what
> we would, we know.

One can see in such excerpts a mastery of plainness and a naturalness of idiomatic intonation. Arnold's invention of a plain modern verse-style ultimately served Eliot (his chief disciple) well, especially in the *Four Quartets*. In the never-ending dispute about what poetry should sound like—plain, like Homer? difficult and exalted, like Pindar? exquisite, like Sappho?—Arnold came down on the side of the plain. In this way he differed from his contemporaries Browning, Tennyson, and Hopkins; and in this way he generated a stream of modern British verse going from Hardy through Eliot's late style to Larkin.

Many of Arnold's poems define for us a whole episode in modern feeling, as he speaks of himself as a man "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/The other powerless to be born" ("Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"). Writing to his mother in 1869, Arnold said of his poetry:

> My poems represent, on the whole, the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions which reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetical sentiment than Tennyson and less intellectual vigour and abundance than Browning; yet... I am likely enough to have my turn as they have had theirs.

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Looking at the Victorian public intellectuals—Carlyle, Newman, Mill, Arnold, Ruskin—we see men of great literary gifts insisting that there were fundamental economic and spiritual needs not being satisfied under the conditions of nineteenth-century social and intellectual life. It seems astonishing, in retrospect, that a single small island should have for some years conducted its public controversies at such a high level, whatever the intellectual or political failings of its individual writers. (Those failings are much insisted upon by those critics availing themselves of twentieth-century hindsight.) It is scarcely remembered now, by those characterizing Arnold as an "elitist," that he insisted, in *Culture and Anarchy*, that culture "seeks to do away with classes." He told his fellow-citizens the ugly truth about their materialist aristocracy, their vulgar middle class, and their brutalized lower class, and his near-despair shows through his plain and sardonic prose:

> In the immense spiritual movement of our day, the English aristocracy ... always reminds me of Pilate confronting the phenomenon of Christianity. [As for the middle class], they are deficient in openness and flexibility of mind, in free play of ideas, in faith and ardour.... They are thrown back upon themselves—upon a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners. And the lower class see before them the aristocratic class, and its civilisation, such as it is, infinitely more out of their reach than out of that of the middle class; while the life of the middle class, with its unlovely types of religion, thought, beauty, and manners, has naturally, in general, no great attractions for them either. And so they too are thrown back upon themselves; upon their beer, their gin, and their *fun*. Now, then, you will understand what I meant by saying that our inequality materialises our upper class, vulgarises our middle class, brutalises our lower.

No one writing such a passage, with such appalled adjectives—"deficient, defective, narrow, stunted, low, unlovely"—is lacking in feeling. Yet the feelings visible here are not the ones that Arnold considered suitable to poetry; they are the strong, even savage, feelings of one who sees his fellow-citizens living humanly stunted lives. And none were offered less to widen their sensibilities than "the masses." Arnold is unsparing on what is being given to them by their so-called sympathizers among popular novelists and ideological propagandists. (His words will strike home to anyone in America contemplating what our schools offer to children as food for their hearts and minds.) "Plenty of people," Arnold writes,

> will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere.

"The great men of culture," he adds, "are the true apostles of equality."

It is no tragedy, then, that Arnold's adult feelings—even if they were conditioned, as no doubt they were, by paternal influence—went out to the English multitude instead of remaining bound to the sentiments of elegy and romance expressed in the lyrics of his twenties and thirties. We honor in writers, after all, their lives as writers. If they can develop and extend their writing while staying within one genre, well and good; but if one vein dries up, a courageous writer—and Arnold was such a writer—explores another seam. By underplaying Arnold's upward trajectory to greatness as a literary critic and a social theorist, by uncritically endorsing Arnold's pained remarks about himself, Hamilton's book leaves us with a limited idea of what it was to be Matthew Arnold. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 5

situation. Germany had a distinct democratic tradition going back to the revolutions of 1848 and before, however stunted it was during the half-parliamentarianism of the Bismarck and Wilhelmine eras. And Germany's Weimar Republic was a thriving, if flawed, democracy.

Or, to use Goldhagen's analogy in a different way, Germany *had* a Konrad Adenauer. And a Kurt Schumacher. And an Ernst Reuter. Serbia's political tradition has been quite different. Expecting Serbia to stop the mass killing and expulsion of Albanians is one thing. Reconstructing Serbia into a model democracy is quite another.

BRUCE MILLER
San Bruno, California

TO THE EDITORS:
It is astonishing that a lecturer from Harvard could write an article filled with so many inaccuracies, unfounded claims, and contradictions, and such blatant ethnic hatred toward the Serbian people. Goldhagen consistently compares today's Serbs to the Germans and Japanese of the 1940s. This is ridiculous. The analogy to World War II and the Holocaust is amateurish and perpetuated by people who really don't understand the history, politics, and cultures of the Balkans.

Goldhagen advocates a complete NATO occupation of Serbia to prevent the Serbs from continuing to wage a "brutal imperial war." But isn't the NATO military offensive against Yugoslavia and the previous Western intervention in the form of forced economic reforms and sanctions imperialistic?

Goldhagen spreads the idea that the Serbs are genocidal, fascist madmen who completely lack the capacity to even comprehend democracy, let alone develop it on their own. He patronizes the Serbian people by stating, for instance, that "[o]ccupation is the prerequisite for producing a thoroughgoing democratic transformation in Serbia." Is he calling for the kind of "democracies" that now exist in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia? (These have actually brought about ethnic cleansing—of Serbs.) Democracy was in its embryonic form in Yugoslavia. There was a chance to defeat Milosevic with the ballot box. However, the West's meddling and its push for rapid reform (and eight-year-long sanctions in Yugoslavia) probably worked to abort real democracy in Yugoslavia and to radicalize Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo who were suffering severe economic hardship. The death of democracy in Yugoslavia was not due to a collective barbarism among Serbs. If the West were truly concerned about promoting democracy in the Balkans, it should have, among other things, encouraged Ibrahim Rugova's decade-long movement of passive resistance—not KLA terrorists—and it should have encouraged democratic developments in Belgrade.

MELISSA WALSH DOIG
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

DANIEL JONAH GOLDHAGEN REPLIES:
Bruce Miller is correct that Germany had some democratic tradition, though,

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in May 1945, the relevant moment, the vast majority of Germans were not democrats. Still, Japan had not much of a democratic tradition at all, and it, too, owing to the American occupation, transformed itself after the war into a stable and internationally responsible democracy. Serbia does not have to become a "model democracy," just an imperfect one that refrains from attacking and murdering non-Serbs.

Melissa Walsh Doig's fanciful inventions about my article and the Balkans are noteworthy only as an exemplary apologia for Serbia's crimes. She makes no mention of the Serbs' genocidal onslaught against Bosnian Muslims, of the indicted war criminal Milosevic's expansionist war against the Croats (which created the context for the Croats' brutal "ethnic cleansing" of Serbs from the Krajina), or of the ongoing eliminationist assault and mass murder of the ethnic Albanians, which is widely supported in Serbia. Instead of expressing a word of sympathy for the more than one million direct victims of the Serbs' violence, she declares the perpetrators to be the victims and blames it all on the West. The NATO countries have made many mistakes (principally, not stopping Milosevic years ago), but being responsible for the Serbs' killing, torturing, and expelling their neighbors is not among them.

Duty and virtue redux

TO THE EDITORS:
Peter Berkowitz's "The Good Fight" exhibits a certain confusion about the place of duty and virtue in our political regime (May 10).

Berkowitz is right to stress how important duty and virtue are as components of our national "public philosophy." But duty is precisely what facilitated and encouraged American intervention in Kosovo. Our politics of "freedom and equality" aren't enough to justify action on an international level. It is only because our duty and virtue kicked in that we have our "save the world" ethos. Without such a sense of duty, we could hardly act on the global scene. And, more importantly, giving liberalism its due, as Berkowitz might coin it (this is an upcoming title by Berkowitz), means exactly that we have to weigh our international duty against the rights of *our* citizens to their life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. And I think we're doing a decent job of striking a balance. No one said liberalism makes our choices any easier; it just tells us what goes into the equation.

ETHAN J. LEIB
New York, New York

PETER BERKOWITZ REPLIES:
Ethan J. Leib makes a good point. Our liberalism does foster duty and depend on virtue, and both duty and virtue incline us to intervene abroad. It is, however, Leib who makes things too easy. For he overlooks what I pointed out: our liberalism also weakens our sense of duty and inclines us to put immediate self-interest before virtue. As for the "decent job" that Leib thinks we have done in "striking a balance" in Kosovo between rights and duty, I would say that the Clinton administration, by hemming and hawing, by rushing headlong, and by hesitating disastrously, has undermined our credibility and tarnished the ideals in whose name we fight.

Shooting the message

TO THE EDITORS:
Clearly, as Gregg Easterbrook noted, the ever-increasing violence coming out of Hollywood does influence behavior ("Watch and Learn," May 17). He was also correct to state that the moguls of the entertainment industry have "twisted the First Amendment" beyond anything our Founding Fathers could have intended.

The dilemma, of course, is how to protect impressionable young (and not-so-young) minds from all this gratuitous violence while also protecting the freedoms of political and artistic expression. Up until now, the dilemma has worked to the advantage of the moguls, who reap huge profits from their debased products while issuing high-minded pronouncements about the sanctity of our constitutional freedoms.

But Easterbrook's notion that some sort of large-scale "shaming" of the industry—which might produce the voluntary self-regulation we always say is preferable to legally mandated limits—is bound to fall short. For it is simply not in the nature of "cynical capitalists," as Easterbrook calls them, to respect limits of any kind. They already proved that by adopting a rating system meant to protect children from excessive violence and then marketing that violence to the children they agreed to protect.

HOWARD BLUTH
Baltimore, Maryland

TO THE EDITORS:
As someone who works in the entertainment industry, I feel compelled to respond to Gregg Easterbrook's comments regarding the link between screen violence and the more real and damaging kind.

I hate to be put in a position of defending *Natural Born Killers*, as it is an appallingly bad film, but the filmmakers were clearly trying to make a social statement about the nature of celebrity in this country and how the line between being famous and being infamous has blurred.

I would also like to invite Easterbrook to stop by and check out my collection of Hong Kong cinema and Japanese anime. If he finds *Natural Born Killers* repulsive and dangerous, I expect him to vomit at first sight. The current wave of hyperviolence in films is really borrowed from the other side of the Pacific. Yet, at the same time, the rate of violent crimes in these two countries is far lower than it is here.

The entire world watches American film and television—our cultural imperialism extends just about everywhere. International box office receipts for Hollywood studios now exceed domestic receipts. If Easterbrook's contention is correct, the phenomena of Jonesboro and Littleton should be happening just about everywhere.

The cases Easterbrook cites where people copied the violence they saw elsewhere only speaks to the disturbed nature of these individuals and their lack of originality. If they hadn't copied *Natural Born Killers*, I suspect they would have found something equally appalling to do.

ADAM LEVINE
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITORS:
Gregg Easterbrook claims that porno videos are not as bad as mainstream Hollywood movies since they depict consensual acts. However, there are a substantial number of feminists and religious people who actually view video sex as showing real acts of rape at worst or, because video sex is devoid of "authentic intimacy," meaningless acts of repetitive, base pleasure at best.

In addition, extreme acts of behavior do not count as incitement or glorification, but as eternal parts of drama and tragedy, precisely because their horror makes the art work exciting. This is one of the masochistic aspects of the spectator's pleasure. If there were no a priori shared cultural norm that was understood regarding what is good as distinct from evil, depictions of evil would have no dramatic impact, and the notion of something being horrifying or outrageous would be meaningless. If Easterbrook is prepared to condemn such treatment of evil, he should be willing to condemn much of the history of art altogether. Otherwise, he is condemned to pick and choose which works of art he considers morally acceptable on a completely haphazard basis.

MITCH HAMPTON
Boston, Massachusetts

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Buyer's Remorse

IT'S A GREAT TIME TO BE IN THE market for genes. "When you want the longest target cDNA clone and you want it in a hurry, call Genome Systems," trumpets a snazzy four-color ad in the frontispiece of a recent issue of *Science*, the world's leading technical journal. "Need Custom Peptides?" asks another ad, equally large and colorful. "We'll send you a free amino acid micrograph magnet just for calling." A third inquires, "Cloning Blunt-End PCR Products? Think Easy." And be sure to ask about our frequent-mutator benefits card.

THE SAME FRIENDLY FEATURES THAT Lands' End and barnesandnoble.com brought to consumer products have arrived in biotech retailing. Laboratory services used to be provided by modest firms that advertised with boring, all-type tombstones. Now that biotech means serious money, the field is yielding to splashy marketing with 800 numbers and competitive verve. "Comprehensive Gene Expression Profile in Just *Three* Hours!" one ad promises. Another shows a grinning lab tech and the headline: "Finally, a transfection reagent that makes you smile, every time." Finally! No babes in evening gowns draped over the petri dishes just yet, but, given the trends in computer advertising, this must be coming.

SADLY, MY CONSUMER NEEDS DO NOT extend to custom peptides. But, after three kids and ten years of resisting, my wife and I finally did our part for urban sprawl by giving in to the second car. What to buy? Our requirements were 30 mpg, built in America, backseat room, and reliability. Many dealers tried to steer us instead to wheeled objects that looked like armored attack vehicles from Desert Storm. (The biggest SUV so far, the 7,000-pound Ford *Bismarck*—I mean, Excursion—will hit the market this fall, after they break a champagne bottle across the hood and flood its ballast tanks.) We settled on a Honda Accord, built in Marysville, Ohio, already meeting some future ultra-low-emission standards, and oh, by the way, able to blow the doors off any SUV. The Accord is a wonderful car, proof that it is indeed possible to combine acceleration, gas mileage, environmental protection, and leg room—something many automakers, and not just the ones in Detroit, would rather you didn't believe.

MAKING THE PURCHASE PROVED TO be a barometer of Web-era sales psychology. Initial negotiations with the dealer were pleasantly straightforward: no pressure tactics, discussion of government safety statistics, and quick agreement at the prevailing market price based on online comparison shopping. Naively, I thought this meant car dealers had finally come out of the 1950s. But, after signing what seemed like the deal, I was shown to a mysterious back room where a post-closer tried to sell me on ridiculously overpriced add-ons like seat-protection spray and extra undercoating. The add-ons lady tried to make her sale by explaining how terribly, terribly prone Hondas are to rust and upholstery damage—not exactly what the floor salesman had said. Declining, I was sent even farther into the back where another post-closer tried to sell me a dubious extended warranty (*Consumer Reports* generally nixes them) by telling me how horribly, horribly unreliable Hondas are. Also not exactly what the floor salesman had said.

THE DEPOSED EDITOR JAMES FALLOWS once said that, if you look at the guest list for a White House state dinner, you will always find at least one person whose presence is completely preposterous. Often it's a lowbrow screen star or a recently paroled multimillionaire. For April's dinner honoring the peace-loving Chinese premier, Zhu Rongji, anyone looking all the way down the list found the name of Representative Alcee Hastings of Florida. Hastings was once a federal judge; in 1989, he was impeached by the Senate for engaging in a "corrupt conspiracy." Bad enough that such a praetorian figure now sits in the House of Representatives; bad enough he's a Democrat. What on earth was Hastings doing at a state dinner just weeks after Clinton's own impeachment trial rent the Senate? Another indication that what our current president admires most in politics is the ability to get away with things.

ONE TEST OF NEWS-ORGANIZATION sincerity is coverage of stories that are adverse to the media's interest. By that measure the major newspapers, newsmags, and networks almost all look bad on the link between Hollywood and violence. Big media organizations profit from entertainment advertising and existing symbiosis with Hollywood celebrities; in the wake of Columbine High, most have tried to downplay the seriousness of the video-violence association. Shortly after the massacre, for instance, *Newsweek* ran an embarrassing "forum" on this subject in which the speakers were almost exclusively film, television, or gun lobbyists pronouncing exoneration upon themselves; the section might as well have been headlined: "DEAR HOLLYWOOD, ALL IS FORGIVEN." *The New York Times* published an excellent story detailing how peer-reviewed scientific studies have proven a link between youthful viewing of violence and actual violence—then buried the article on page A27, perhaps so as not to upset *Times* editors' Sag Harbor social contacts who owe their fortunes to the promotion of violence in "entertainment." Carefully interring the real story, the *Times* gave better play to a droll piece in which the totally objective David Geffen was quoted at length absolving his industry. Geffen blamed Columbine on errors of pharmacology, opining, "Clearly these are very disturbed kids." Forget why the *Times* stipulates a record-industry executive as qualified to render clinical opinions regarding psychiatry. Isn't the question, Dr. Geffen, what *causes* kids to become violently disturbed?

FOR SHEER CRAVENNESS, THE PRIZE went to ABC News, which, on the day of the White House conference on violence and kids, ran a segment accompanied by extensive graphic footage of murder sequences from *The Matrix* and other carnage flicks. Blood splattered as the voice-over intoned about the dangers of showing blood. Peter Jennings didn't stop to note that ABC is owned by Disney, whose subsidiaries, such as Miramax Films, eagerly glamorize murder and rape; thus the network's owner has a financial stake in making small of the link between video and violence. (One hopes that, wherever Walt is, he doesn't know that Disney's modern management has made the company name synonymous with "vulgarian.") The ABC piece also featured the argument that producers aren't really to blame: exploitative violence in entertainment will continue so long as the public keeps buying.

SETTING ASIDE THAT THE BUYERS WE worry about are kids who don't know better, since when does the fact that people will buy mean that a company is being responsible by selling? Imagine how *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, or ABC News would react if a drug company argued, "We'll keep selling thalidomide as long as that's what the public wants."

GREGG EASTERBROOK

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COMMENTARY THAT HITS

BELOW THE BELTWAY

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